Creating an Online Course with WebCT

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Overview

WebCT is an online course authoring system that provides functions like housing the syllabus, course schedule, lecture notes, assignments, chat area, discussion area, glossary, index, presentations, online exams, and much more. The WebCT environment features the designer view that allows educators to customize the layout of their online courses. This overview provides an introduction to the WebCT online course authoring system by discussing certain features and tools in which educators work with when creating online course materials.

In this course, you will be learning to use WebCT to create, design, and develop online courses. Everyone in this class with have their own WebCT accounts in which they can design and develop their WebCT courses. These accounts will be distributed later in the term. There are two contact people in which you can ask questions concerning WebCT (other than myself). These two individuals are:

- Gene O' Gordon [Eugene.Gordon@usm.edu]
- Chad Seals [chad.seals@usm.edu] who also happens to be a member of this class

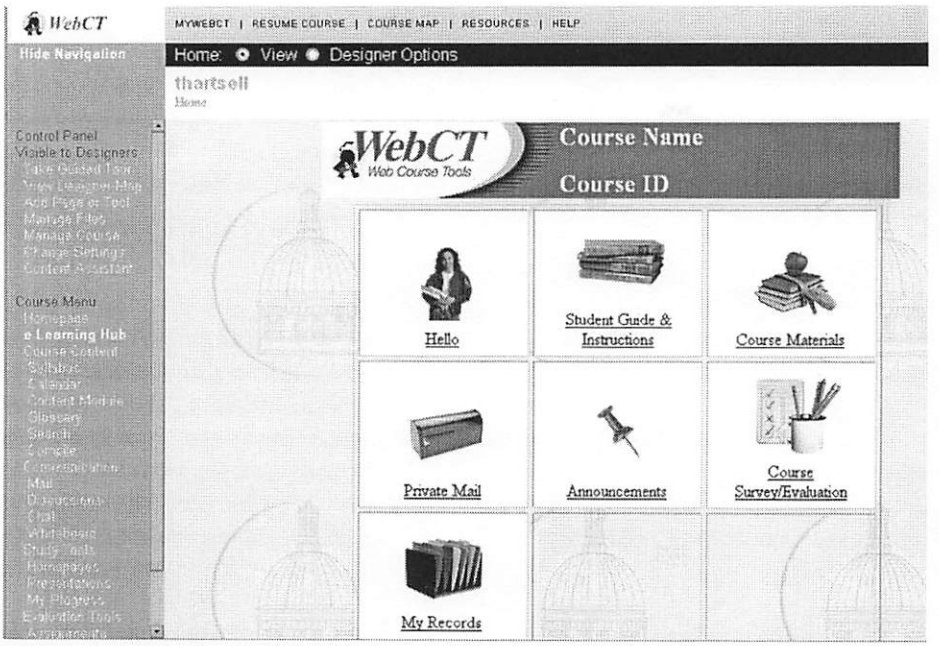
So, in case if I cannot get to your question or do not know the answer, the two individuals listed above can assist and are also very helpful.

Features and Tools

WebCT provides educators with many different options in designing their online courses. Educators have a choice among different tools to incorporate into their online courses such as chats, calendars, glossaries, etc. The authoring system also allows educators to choose from various features such as exams, content modules, presentations, whiteboards, assignment drop boxes, etc. Depending upon the instructor's needs, all of these tools and features could be used to build an online course. Or, if the instructor just wants to use WebCT as a supplement, he/she can use only a few of the tools and features WebCT provides.

The graphic on the following page shows some of the features and tools that are available to the instructor. This is the default template that one would see when first arriving to their courses. WebCT has already set up some of the tools for the user. For this course, *you will start from scratch.* Beginning from scratch is the best approach because if you work with the graphics and pages that WebCT has already set up for you, it will become confusing later when determining which materials are yours and which ones WebCT used to create the templates.

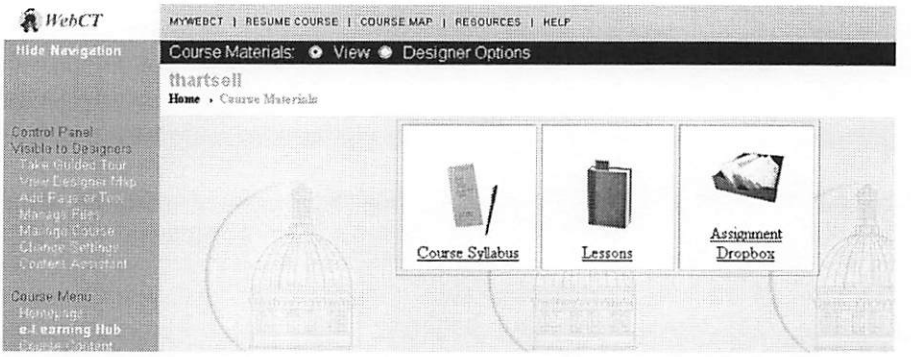
The graphic below shows the starting template (Homepage) for my course when I first started using WebCT. However, your starting Homepage may look quite different. If the page does look different, do not panic because remember everyone will be starting from scratch.



The first cell contains the **Hello or Welcome page** that when clicked on, opens into a new window. You will find that certain pages have the option to open into a new window. Other pages do not have that option and the page will only open within the WebCT content frame.

The second cell houses the **Student Guide & Instructions** that the Continuing Education Department here at The University of Southern Mississippi provides (you may have noticed that on the IT 650 WebCT Homepage, I removed that feature).

The third cell is the **Course Materials** section that when clicked on opens into a separate page like the one to the right. Everyone's Course Materials page will look a little different depending upon the design and what has been selected. Here, we have the Course Syllabus, Lessons, and Assignment Dropbox. Please note that you can always change the wording of the text links. These text links are the defaults of WebCT.



The fourth cell houses the **Private E-mail** tool where students and instructor(s) can e-mail one another from within WebCT. The e-mail tool functions the same as any other e-mail system and is quite easy to learn.

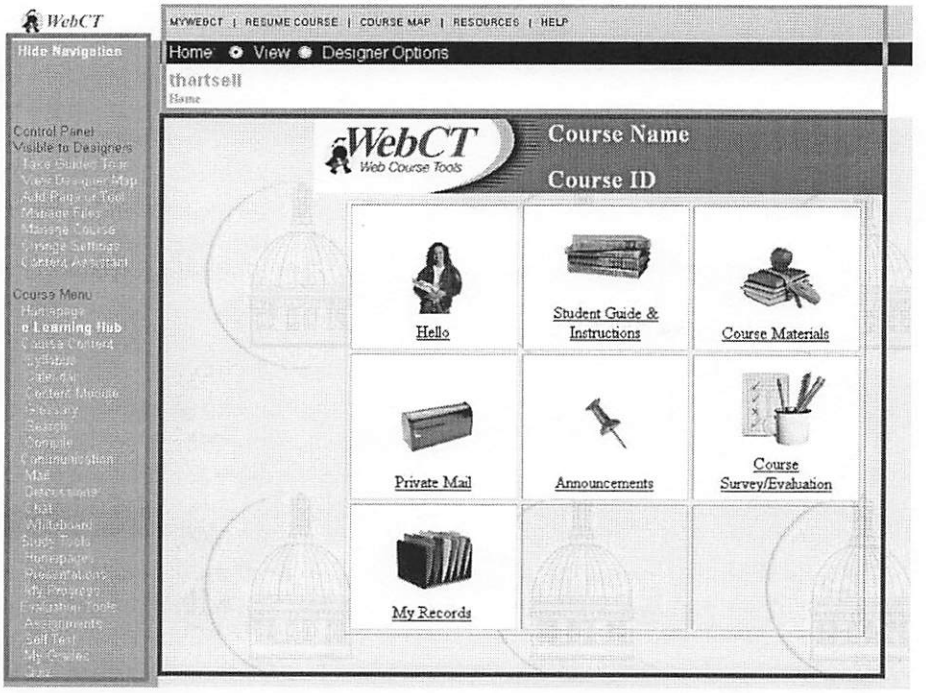
The fifth cell is the **Announcements** that when clicked upon opens into a new window. If you click on Announcements in IT 650, the announcements appear in a separate window and not within the WebCT content frame.

Course Survey/Evaluation is in the sixth cell. When a student clicks on this link, he/she is taken to the Quizzes and Surveys Page like the graphic on the left.

Finally, on this default Homepage template, **My Records** is seen in the seventh cell. This is more for the students who are enrolled in the course. You as an instructor will not see the contents of this feature area. Students can check their grades and progress in this area. Unfortunately, I have not been able to see what goes on in this area so I cannot tell you much. However, you certainly will by taking this course.

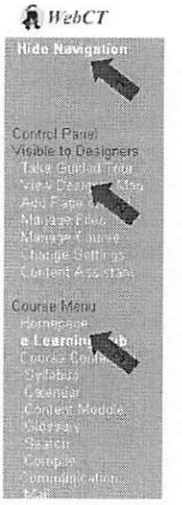
Environment

An overview of the WebCT environmental layout is necessary to get you started in understanding how WebCT works. The graphic below displays the Homepage with several different types of frames. There are three different frames in WebCT and each has its own functions. The **Content Frame** is highlighted within the red border. This area contains the banner and all of the links to the different features and tools. The links could be in the form of icons like the example to the left. However, you can also use buttons to link students to the other features and tools. This will be discussed later in this handout.



Highlighted within the turquoise border is the **Top Menu Frame**. This area contains the top row links, the breadcrumb trail, and the toggle between the student and designer view options.

The third frame is located within the green and is referred to as the **Side Navigation Frame**. Here, you can find the hide navigation option, the designer's control panel, and the course menu links (if you chose to have some). Each area has its own particular functions and we will discuss how you can change the color properties of each frame later in another handout.



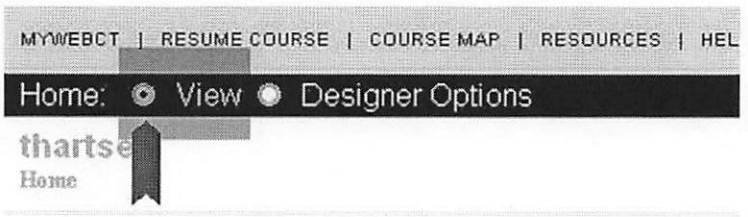
The Side Navigation Frame has three areas: (1) hide navigation, (2) designer's control panel, and (3) the course menu. The *hide navigation* bar (Number 1) serves as a toggle between hiding the side navigation bar (thus expanding the content frame across the entire window) and showing the navigation bar (when you need to get to the designer's control panel). Hiding or showing the navigation panel is a personal preference and can be controlled by the user. The designer's *control panel* (Number 2) contains links to areas that you will need to get to as an instructor when designing the course. The most common ones you will use is Add Page/Tool, Manage Files, Manage Course, and Change Settings. Finally, the *course menu* area (Number 3) displays the links that you set up for students in your course. These serve as an index to the features and tools you have in the course. I prefer not to use these because I like my students to use one form of navigation as opposed to many. Thus, under my Homepage for IT 650, the only link is to the Homepage.

The Top Menu Frame has two important features that you will learn to use quite quickly. One is the toggle between view and designer options, and the other is the breadcrumb trail. These two features will be discussed more thoroughly in the next section.

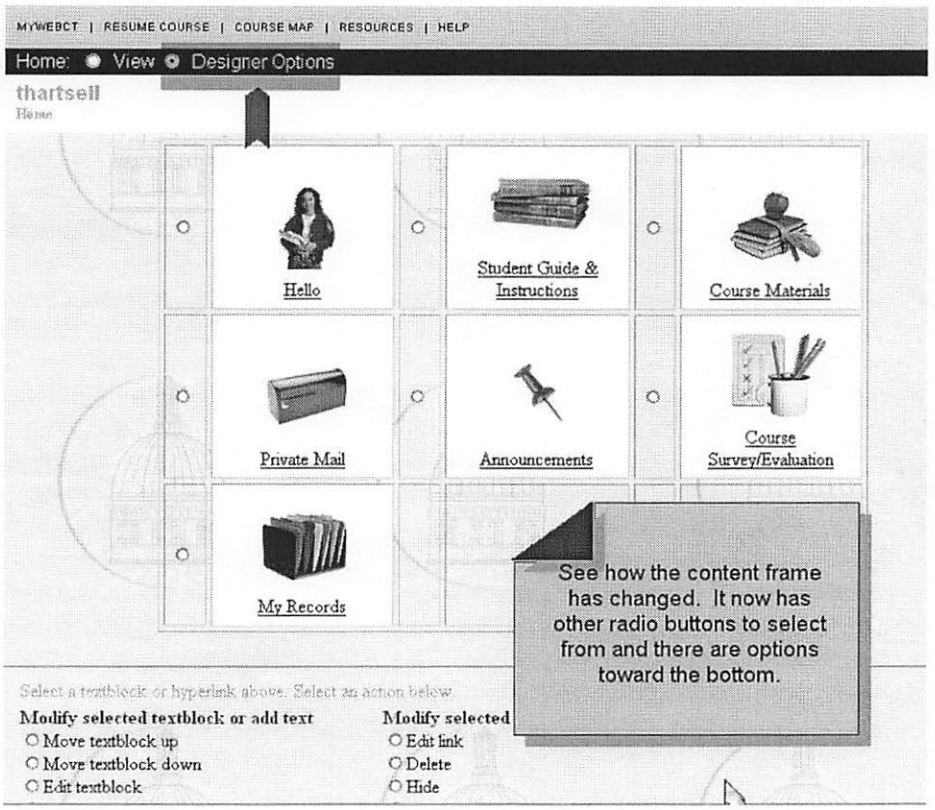
Different Views

As a course designer in WebCT, you will be toggling between two different views. The first view is the **Student View** (or View). Once you make changes to the course, it is best to view the results under the student view option to make sure the changes meet your needs. However, as a course designer, you will need to select and work within the **Designer Options** view. This view allows you to make the changes, additions, etc. to your pages and tools.

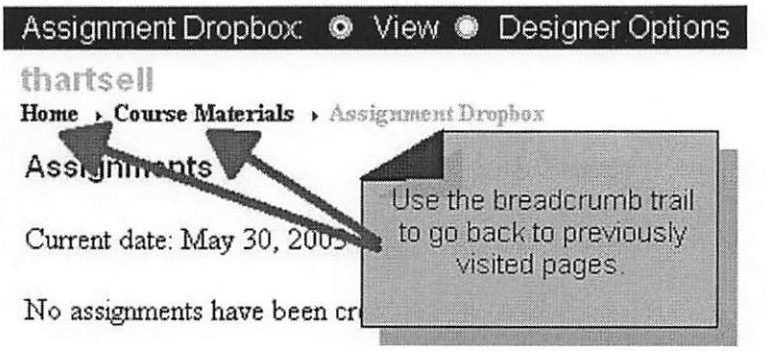
To toggle between the two view perspectives, use the View toggle radio buttons seen in the graphic below.



The first button is student view to see the results. However, if you want to edit your course, then you will need to click on the Designer Options radio button. Once you click on that option, the page format will change indicating that this is place to make changes. The graphic below shows how the content frame changes once the Designer Options is selected.



The breadcrumb trail in WebCT is the main navigation menu to go from one page to another. For instance, you will always see Home at the top and that is the first page. So, if you want to go back Home, click on Home. DO NOT USE THE BACK BUTTON on the Internet browser to return to previous pages. Use the breadcrumb trail instead because the BACK button may not always take you back to the place you want to go.



Planning

After you have decided upon a course or training workshop that you would like to put online using WebCT, the next step is to prepare the materials. You will receive a more detailed outline of what is expected in this course concerning your WebCT course later. However, a brief outline is provided here to help you get started in creating materials for your course.

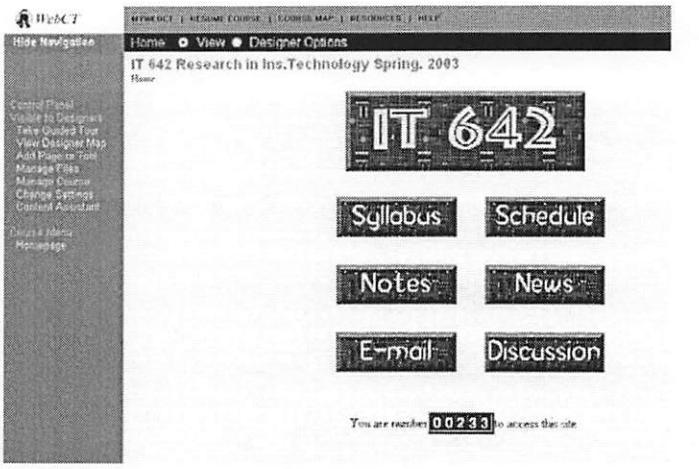
Basically, you will have four major areas in your course: welcome page, course materials (that will house your syllabus, schedule, lessons, assignment drop box), communications (chat, discussion, e-mail), and quizzes. You could have an announcements page like I have for IT 650, but that will be optional. However, you will have to eventually create two text blocks on the Homepage but that will be covered later.

Based upon these requirements you will need to start creating your files and graphics that will then be uploaded to WebCT. WebCT is just a shell to house all of the materials, so you will have to create these materials outside of WebCT.

When you *create written materials* for your course (e.g., schedule, lessons) they must be in an Internet-ready format (HTML). If you have any graphics tied to these pages, you will also have to upload the graphics. It is recommended that you use Netscape Composer to create the written materials. I have saved documents in MS Word as HTML pages before and nothing really seem to work. Line spacing is always off, I lose the text formatting, and the bullets never come out the way I want them. So, I highly recommend that you use a Web authoring program like Netscape Composer when creating instructional materials for WebCT. A simple online tutorial for using Netscape Composer can be found at:

http://wp.netscape.com/browsers/using/newusers/composer/index.html

For graphics, you can use some of the graphics located under WebCT's files. The files have quite a lot of graphics to select from depending upon what you want (e.g., clipart, photographs). However, you are also required to create graphics of your own (or borrowed from somewhere else). You should decide upon whether you like to have pictures/animations as your icons or buttons. The graphics provided on the other page shows the difference between the two layouts.



So, depending upon the preferred design, your content pages could have icons with text links (as shown on the left) or graphic buttons without text links (as shown on the right). Either way, both design layouts are just as effective. You will also have to create a banner of your own (do not use the banner option that WebCT provides).

There are a lot of free online sites that provides banners and button makers. In addition, there are a number of sites that provides graphics and animations. I will mention a few here:

- Absolute Background Textures Archive http://www.grsites.com/textures/ (this is where I got the background and buttons used in my IT 642 course; program is very easy to use)
- Cooltext.com http://cooltext.com/ (this site makes nice buttons and logos, but it take a long time for the buttons to be created; slow site)
- CoolArchive http://coolarchive.com/ (nice site; has button makers, logo generators, animations, backgrounds, etc.)
- Flaming Text http://www.flamingtext.com/start5.html (good site to create banners)
- Scream Design http://www.andyart.com/free.html (just has a lot there)
- Animation Factory http://animationfactory.com (get some free animated gifs; I used these in IT 650)
- 3D Textmaker http://www.3dtextmaker.com/ (nice place to get fancy text; I used this for the text banners in IT 650)

File Formats

WebCT accepts various file formats for files, presentations, graphics, etc. All of the materials need to be saved in an Internet-ready format meaning that documents need be saved as HTML files, and graphics need to be saved as GIF or JPEG. You can upload PowerPoint files as PPT without having to save them as HTML (this is from my own experience) and you can upload PDF files as well (as evidenced by this handout).

When you save the files and graphics, **be sure to leave no spaces in the file name**. For instance, ify ou want to save your syllabus as "Syllabus Math 101," you can save the file as "Syllabus_Math101." Hence, if you want to have spaces in your file names, just use the underscore to indicate a space. The same holds true for graphic file names. Just remember not to use spaces for anything you save for WebCT.

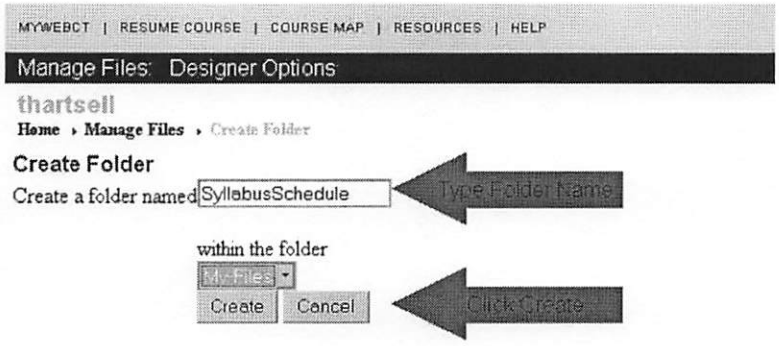
Creating Folders

Creating folders for your materials in WebCT is quite easy. There are several folders in which I suggest that you create to house the materials after uploading.

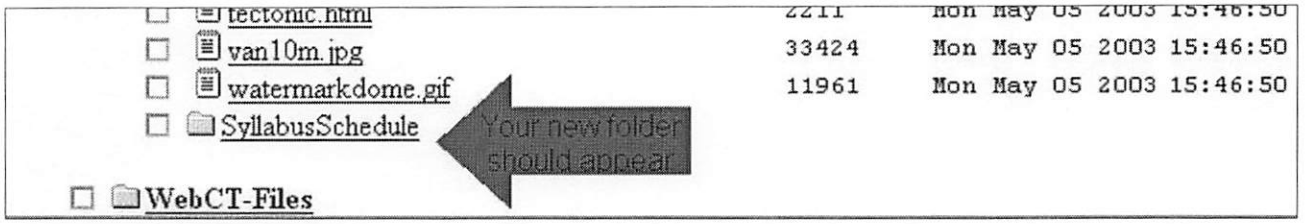
- SyllabusSchedule (this folder will house the syllabus and schedule and any graphics that may go along with them)
- Lessons or Notes (this folder will house the lessons you create and any graphics that may go along with them)
- Quiz (this folder will house the text bank questions)
- Media (this folder will contain all the graphics used to create the content pages of your course such as the banner)
- Miscellaneous (a just-in-case folder)

To create folders in WebCT, click on **Manage Files** under the Designer's Control Panel in the side navigation frame. You will then arrive to the *Manage Files: Designer Options* page. When you are there, go to the Folder Options and click on GO (just make sure the words Create New is in the dialog box).

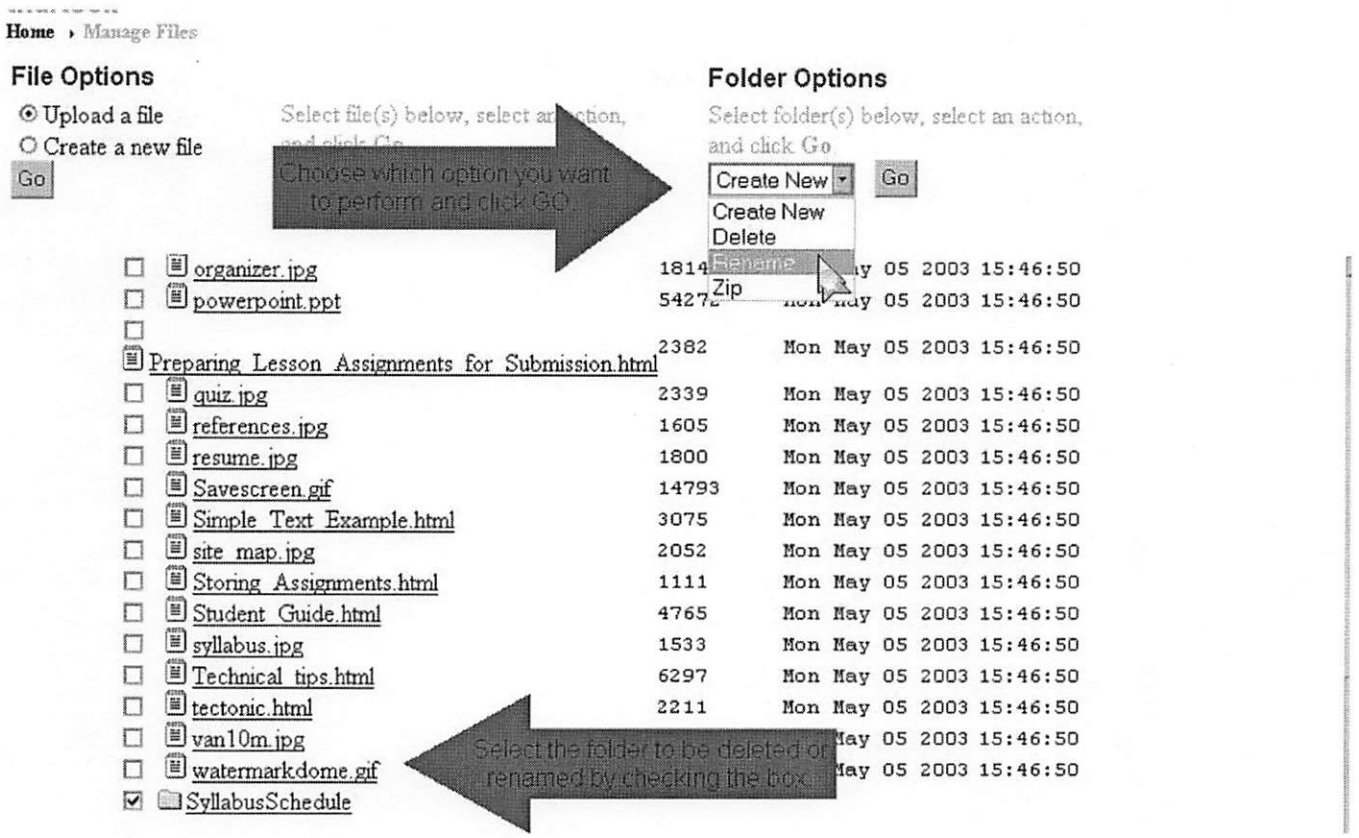
You will then arrive to another page to continue the process in creating a new folder. Type in the name of the new folder and click on the create button

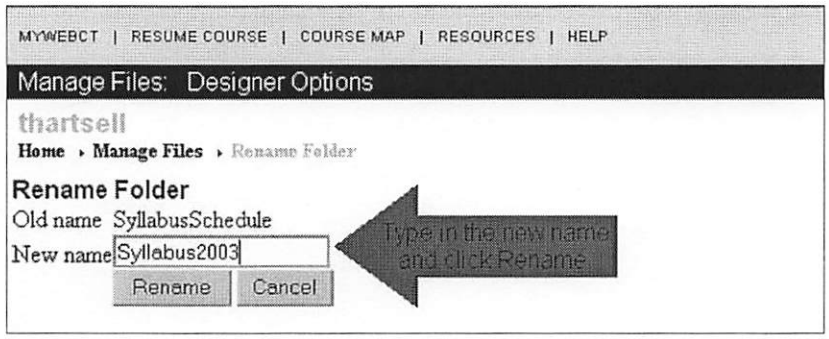


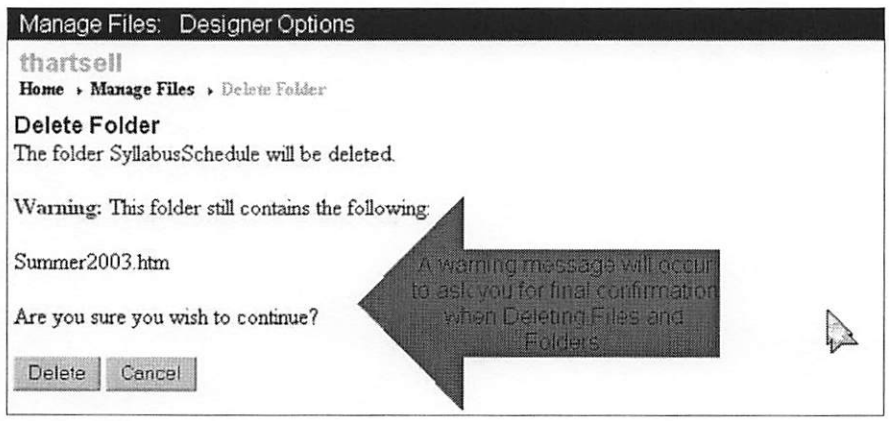
Your new folder should appear under the My-Files area. If the folder is not located at the top, then you will have to scroll toward the bottom. Later on, I will teach you how to clean out the My-Files in the Starting From Scratch section in the next handout.



If you want to delete the folder or change its name, the process is quite simple and much like creating the folder. First, select the folder by clicking on the square next to the folder's name. Then, go up to Folder Options and select either Delete or Rename. Click on the GO button to proceed after that and follow what WebCT asks.

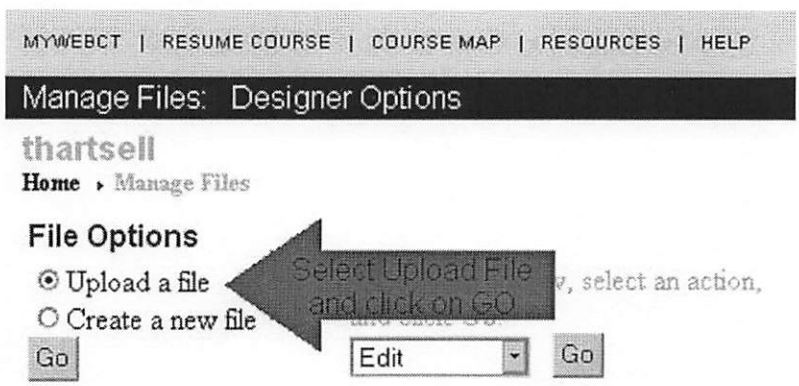




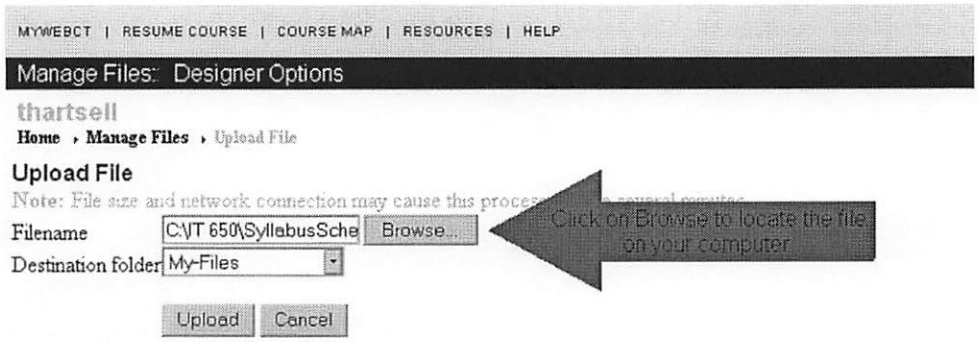


Uploading Files

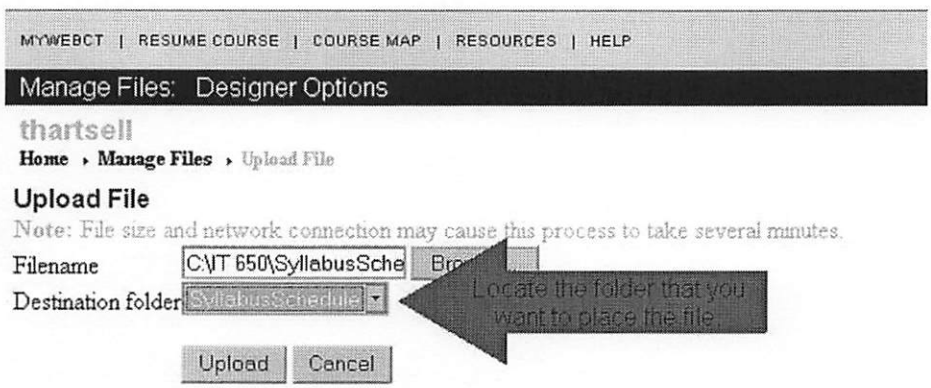
Uploading files is a little more complicated than creating folders. However, if you follow the steps provided, the process should be quite easy. First, go back to the **Manage Files: Designer Options** area if you are not there (click on Manage Files under the Control Panel). Select the Upload a File option and then click on the GO button.



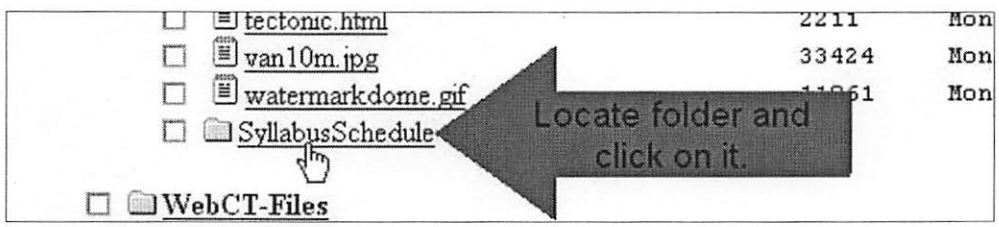
When you arrive to the next page, you need to locate the file that is to be uploaded. Most likely, the file will on your hard drive. Click the BROWSE button to search your computer's folders. When you find the file, click on the file and it should appear in the dialog window.



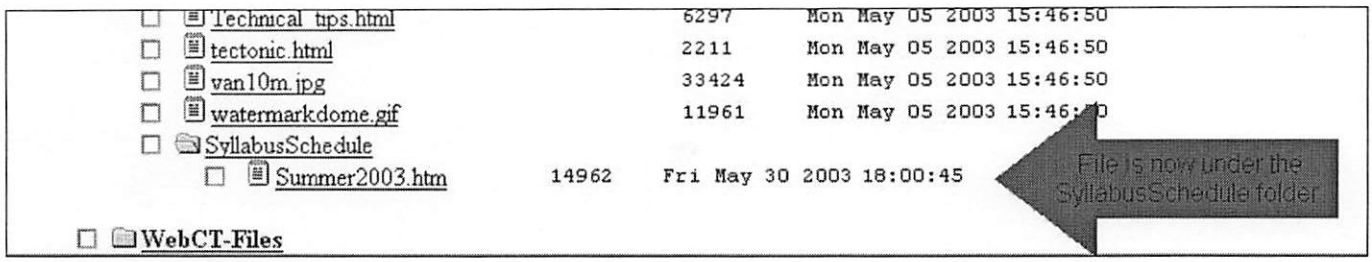
Now, you will have to tell WebCT where to place the file. A SyllabusSchedule folder was previously created, so I will use that folder to place the file.



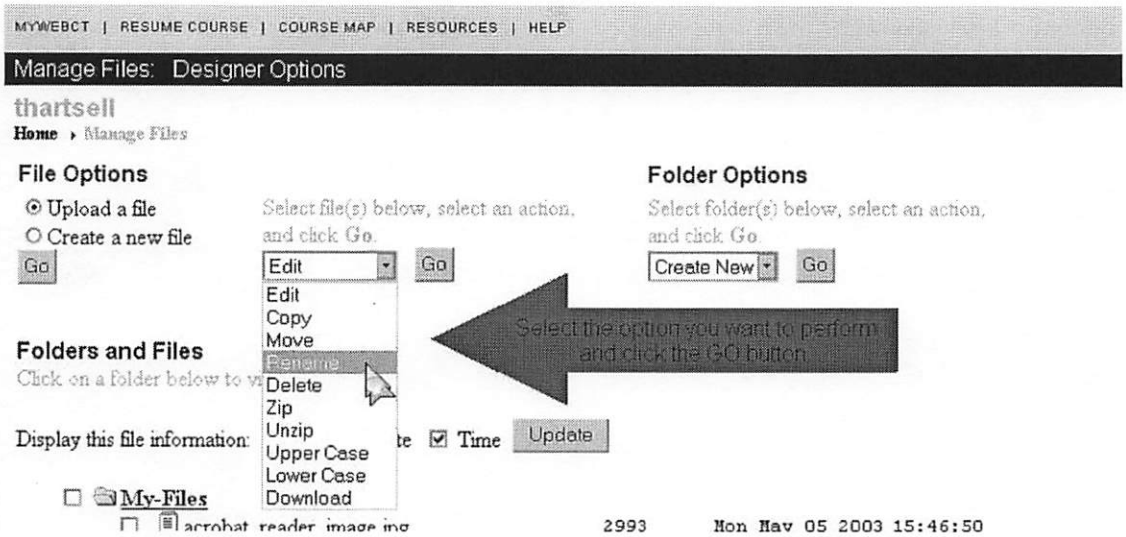
Once the file has been uploaded to the folder, it is time to check. Locate the folder in which you saved the file and click on the folder.



After you click on the folder, you should see the uploaded file underneath it along with its dated information.



Deleting and renaming files are quite simple to do. Just click on the square box located to the left side of the file and go to File Options. There, go over to Edit and click the arrow. This will bring a drop-down list for you to select from. Chose either rename or delete and click on the GO button. After that, just follow WebCT's questions.



Creating an Online Course with WebCT

CONTENTS

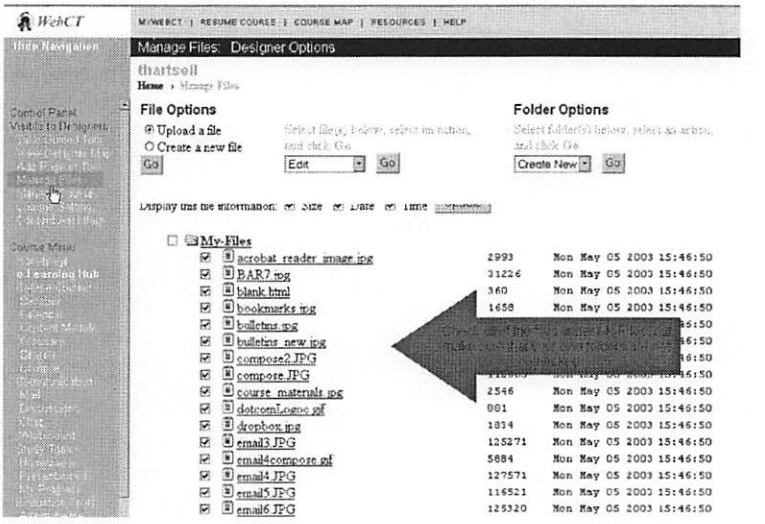
- Starting from Scratch
- Adding & Deleting Pages
- Adjusting Page Properties
- Modifying Individual Pages
- Using Textblocks

Customizing the Layout

There are many things that you can do to make the look of your WebCT course uniquely yours. The course could look professional and formal with darker colors and realistic graphics. Or, the course could be dynamic and informal with bright colors and animations. The appearance and design of the course will solely depend upon the target audience and personal taste of the instructor. But, the design and layout should be planned out and not done half-hazardly. Navigation should be smooth and easily comprehensible to the user. Using one navigation scheme on one page and then a different scheme on another page will cause chaos and confusion in the end. WebCT does allow quite a bit of freedom in terms of how the course can appear to the user. Although the standard template is pretty much there in terms of the three frames and the tables used to house the different tools and features, you can still adapt the look of the course to accommodate your target audience. In this handout tutorial, certain things like changing the links in tools and feature sections, altering page properties, and customizing textblocks will be discussed.

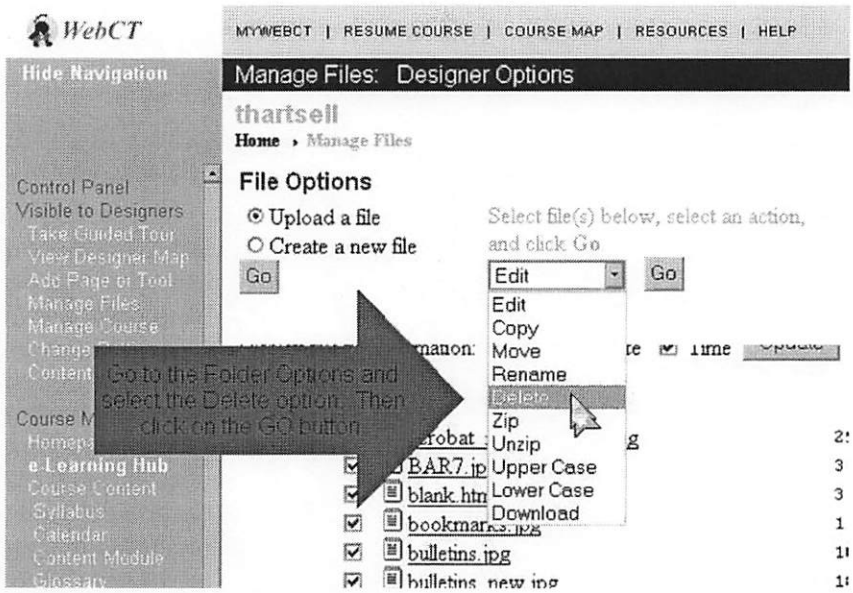
Starting from Scratch

When working with WebCT, it is best to start from scratch. As I mentioned before, starting from scratch will prevent confusion at a later time when you try to decipher which folders, files,an d graphics are yours and which ones WebCT used to create the initial templates. In addition, it is also best to remove the index links in the side navigation frame for the Course Menu because you will obviously not be using everything that WebCT has placed there.

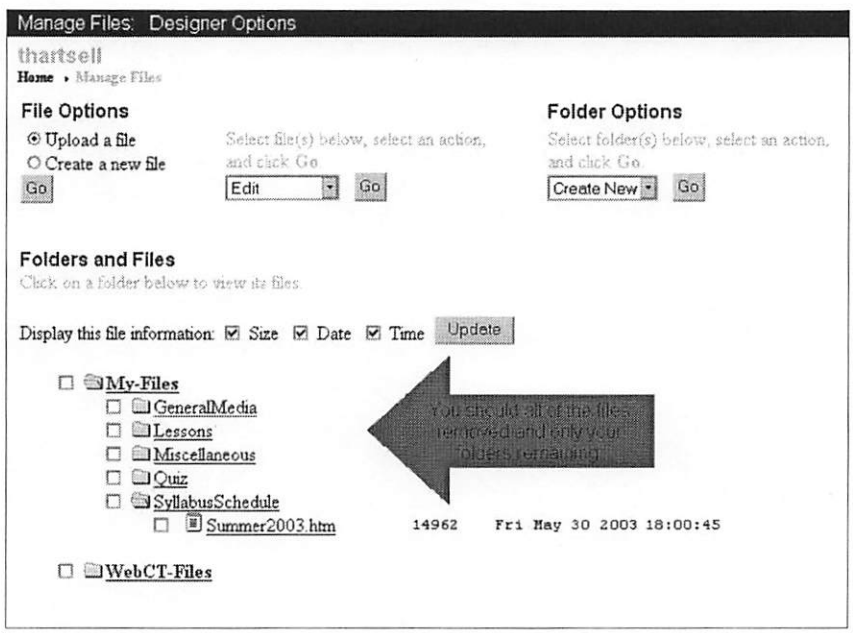


So, to start from scratch, you must first remove the files and graphics found under the My-Files area. Click on *Manage Files* under the Control Panel located within the side navigation frame. Then, begin clicking on all of the squares next to the files and graphics. WARNING: BE SURE NOT TO CHECK YOUR NEWLY CREATED FOLDERS or the MY-FILES FOLDER.

Once everything has been checked or selected, go to the **File Options** area and click on the arrow next to *Edit*. Select the *Delete* option and click on the GO button. This will take you to a window that asks for confirmation. Click on the DELETE button to remove the files.



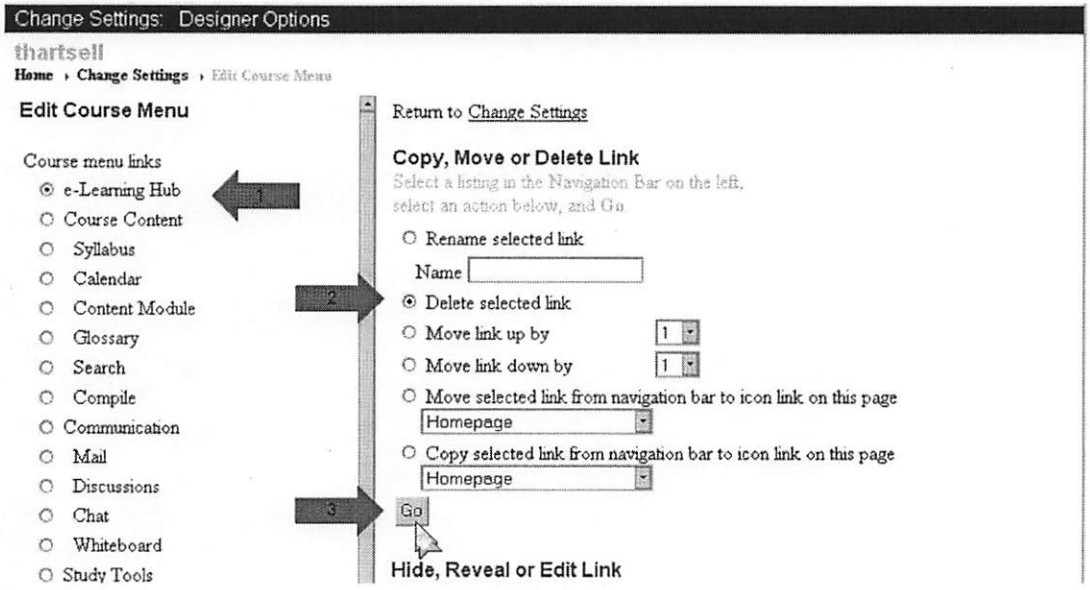
After deleting the files you should see a window that has the My-Files folder and the WebCT-Files folder. Under the My-Files folder, make sure that you still have your other five folders: Media, SyllabusSchedule, Notes/Lessons, Quiz, and Miscellaneous. If they are not there, you can create these folders again. Please refer to the instructions in the *Overview Handout*.



Now, you will have to remove all of the index links in the Course Menu. Click on *Change Settings* located in the Side Navigation Frame under the Control Panel. Find the option **Course Menu** and click on the GO button.

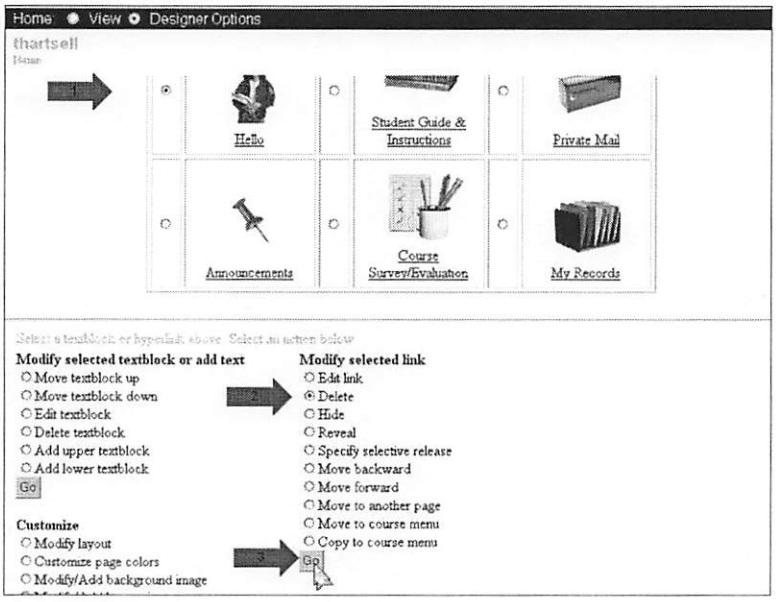
Then, click on one of the menu link's radio button. Click on the *Delete Selected Link* option and then click on the GO button. You will have to repeat this process for all of the links.

WARNING: Once you delete a link, it is gone permanently (I do not know how to add links). So, if you plan on having some links under the Course Menu, please keep a few there. You can always change the name of the link, its order, and its hyperlink later as you can see from the various options below.



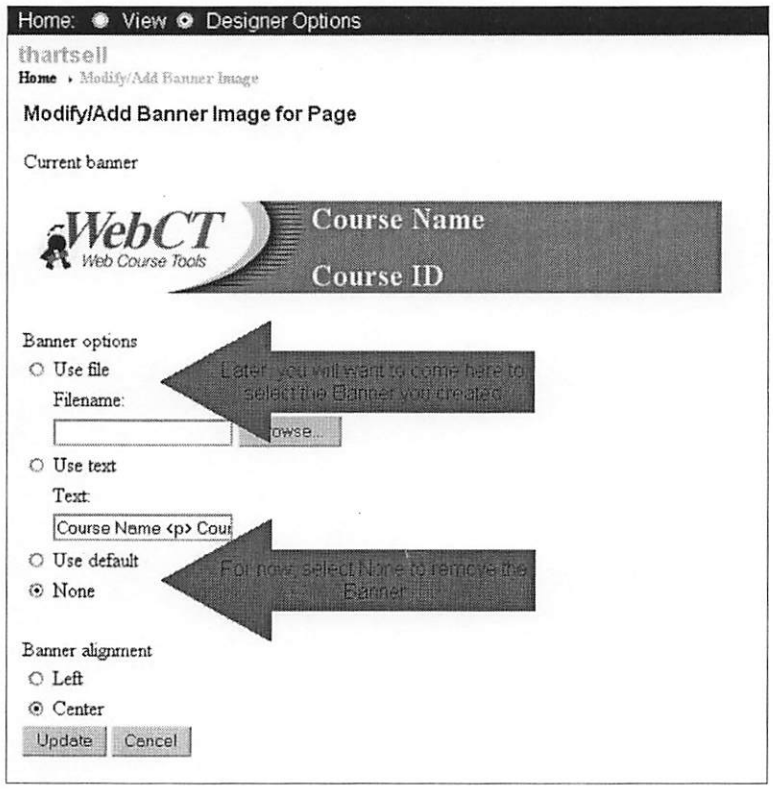
Now, you will really have to remove all of the components from each of the content pages (the tables with the links and any banners). You will first have to go into **Designer Options** view. Once you are there. Click on a radio button next to the component to be removed.

Then, find the **Modify Selected Link** area and click on the *Delete* option. Click on the GO button and a confirmation window will appear. Select OK. Keep repeating the process until all of the linked components are gone.



Finally, you will need to remove the banner. Remember that you will be adding a banner of your own later. Locate the **Customize** area and select the *Modify/Add Banner Image* option. Click the *None* option to remove the button and click UPDATE

NOTE: Just remember the place we go to do this, because when you want to add your own banner later, you will return to the same place. Just click BROWSE to locate your banner on your computer's drive and select it.



Your course should have nothing in it after performing all of these functions. If you cannot return to the Homepage from the Breadcrumb Trail, try using the *Homepage Index* link under the Course Menu on the Side Navigation Frame.

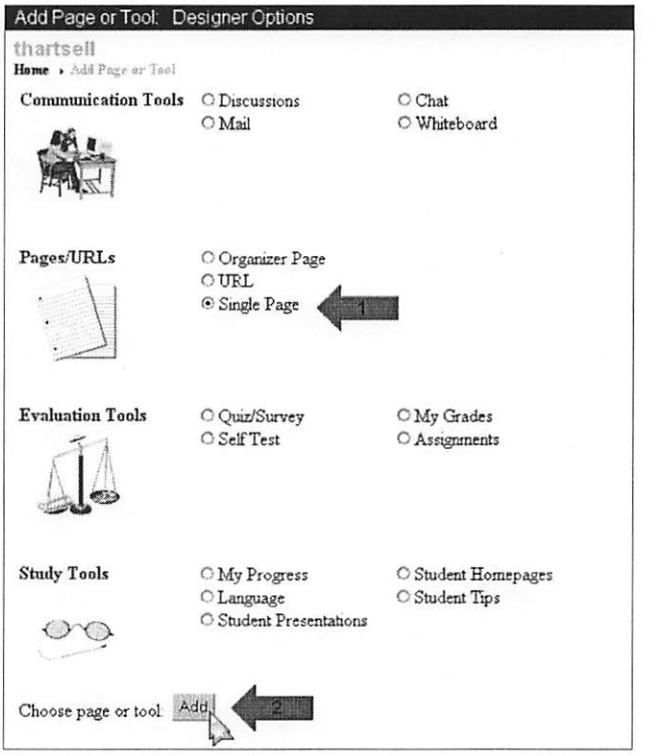
Adding and Deleting Pages

Now that you have a "blank slate" to say the least, it is time to build your course from the ground-up. The first thing to do is to add content pages to the Homepage. Performing this function is quite simple. It is mostly a matter of pointing and clicking. Hopefully, you have all of the graphics (icons, animations, buttons) on your computer's drive (see the Graphics & Animations handout). If you do not, you may want to wait to perform this step. However, you can always change the icons/buttons at a later time.

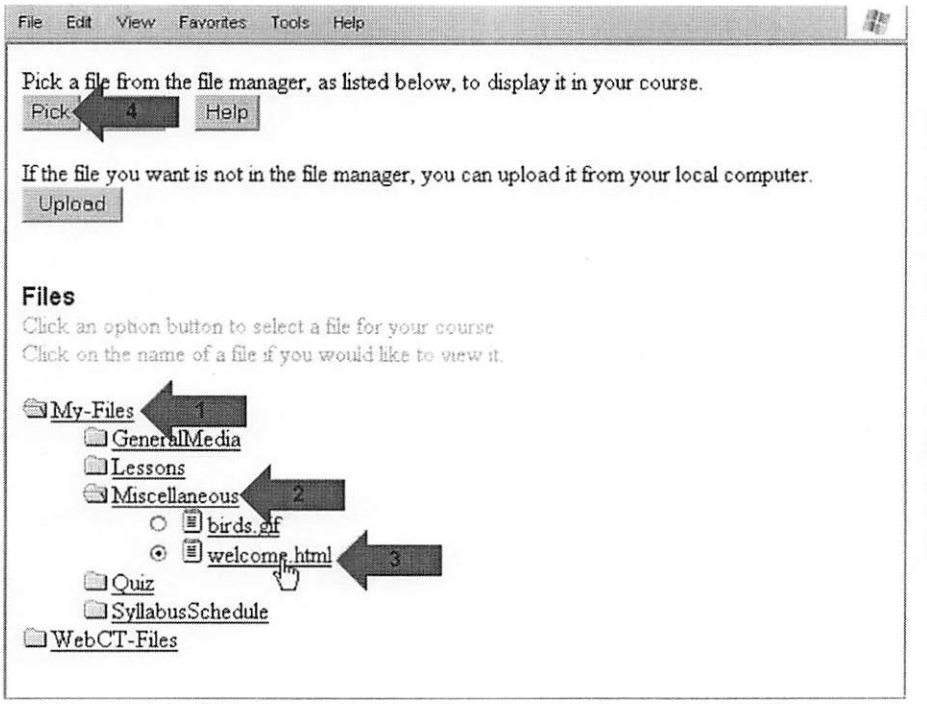
First, go into *Designer Options* view. Click on the **Add Page or Tool** link under the control panel. You will the see various pages you can add to the course within the content frame. To be honest, I am not quite sure

what the difference is between all of the pages. I guess you will have to do some experimenting yourself. But, the most common pages used are: Content Module (for your lessons), Syllabus, Calendar (optional), Communication Tools, Pages/URL's, and Evaluation Tools. Because you will at least have four components on your Homepage, let us create pages for the Welcome Page, Course Materials Page, Communications Page, and Quiz Page. If you want to add others, feel free to do that such as adding Student Homepages.

The Welcome page should be added as a blank single page. Hopefully, you have created your Welcome page as an HTML file (see the handout on Syllabus, Schedule, and Welcome Pages). If not, you will have to do that now. To add the Welcome page as a blank page, locate the *Single Page* option and click on the radio button to the left. Then, click on ADD (see graphic on the left).



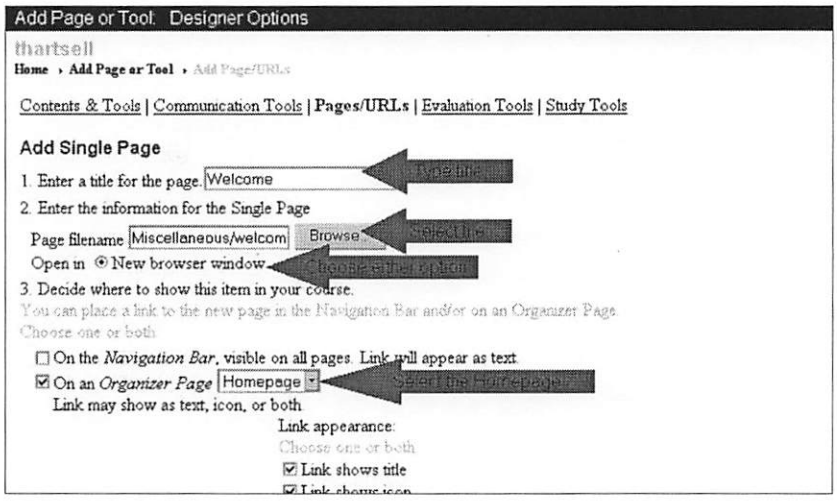
Once you added the page, a window will appear with several options. When adding the Welcome page, it is important that you have the graphics created and uploaded, as well as the HTML page. I would upload all of these to the Miscellaneous folder created earlier. Please see the handout on Syllabus, Schedule, and Welcome Pages for instructions on uploading.



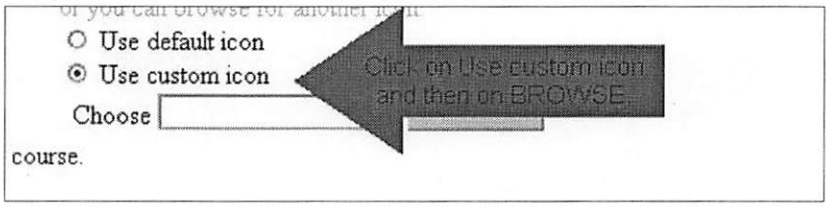
In the new window for **Add Single Page**, type in the title of the page (e.g., Welcome). To find the HTML file for the Welcome Page, click on the BROWSE button. This will open up into a new window. From there, click on My-Files (Number 1), then click on Miscellaneous (Number 2) or whatever folder you saved the HTML file to, and then click on the radio button next to the file (Number 3). Once you select the file, click on the PICK button (Number 4).

Once the file has been selected, you can choose whether you want the Welcome Page to appear in a new window or within the content frame of WebCT. Either choice is appropriate, the decision depends upon what you want the students to see.

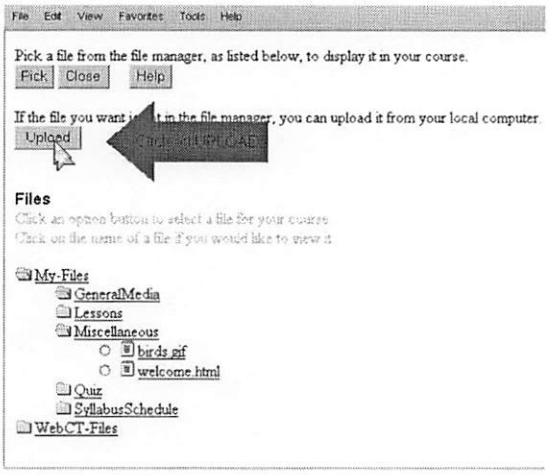
Make sure that the Welcome page will be shown on the *Organizer Page* for the Homepage as seen in the example to the left.

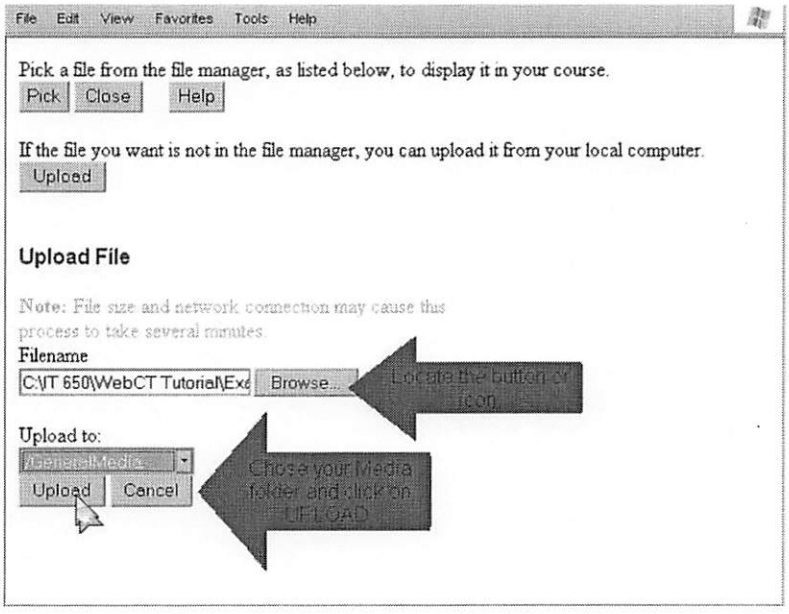


The next step is to select the button or icon you want to represent the Welcome Page. If you have not already uploaded your graphics to the Media folder, you can still perform this task here (or use the default icon for now and change it later). Click on the option Use Custom Icon and then on the BROWSE button.

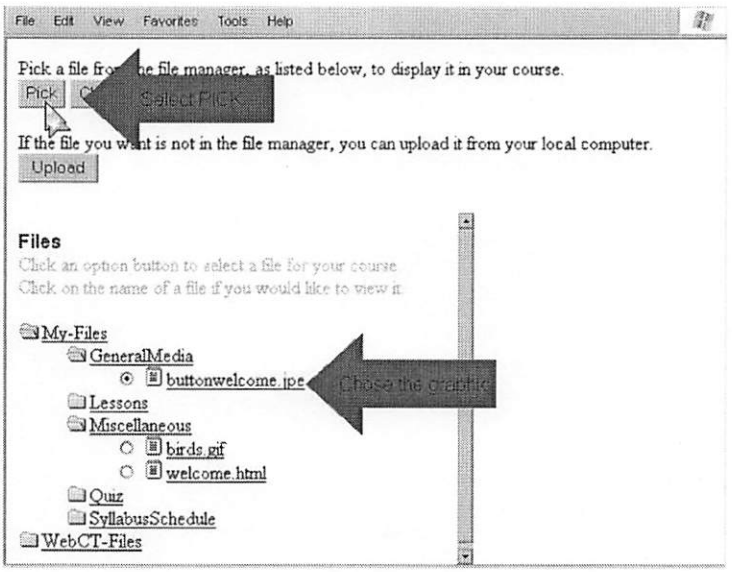


When you arrive to a new window, click on the UPLOAD button to start the uploading process. The process is similar to uploading files in the *Manage Files* area. However, this time you can only upload one file at a time.

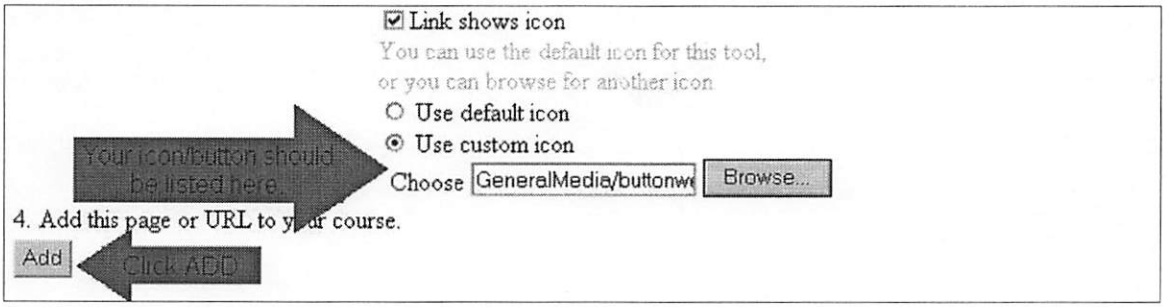




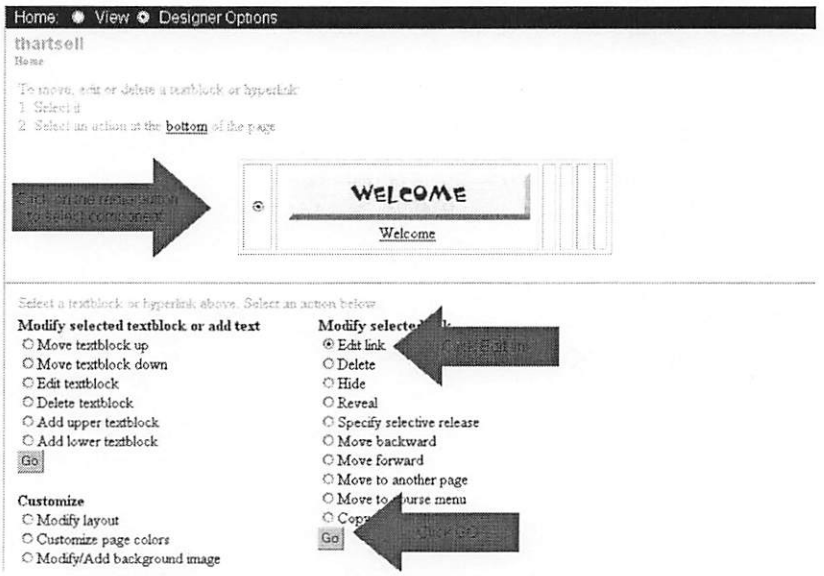
Once the button/graphic has been uploaded to your Media folder, click the graphic and then on PICK.



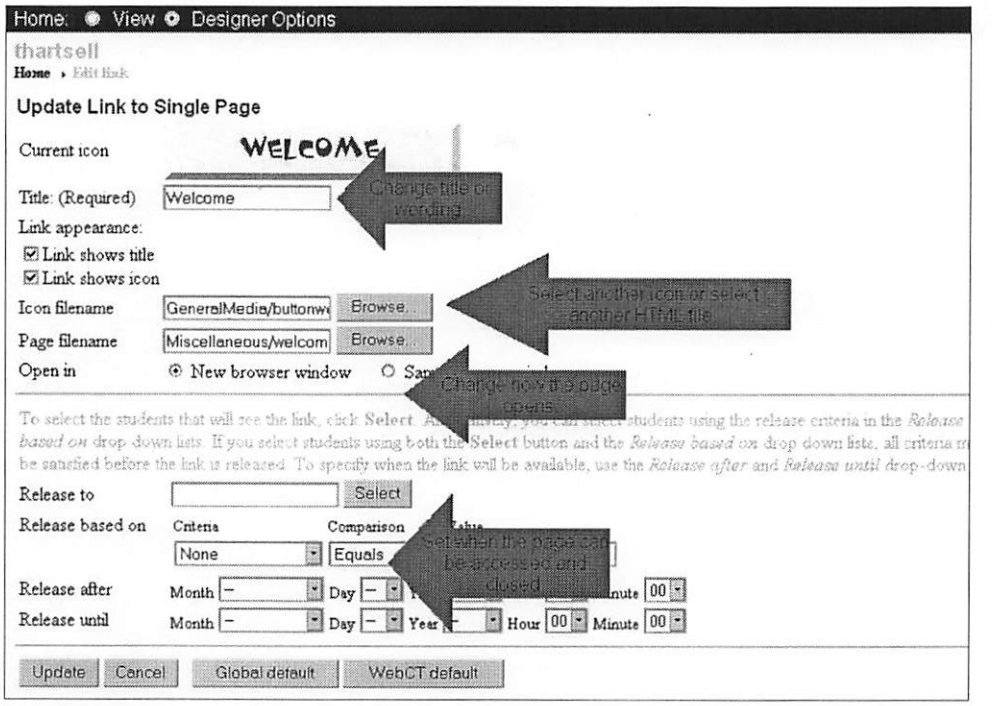
Once your graphic has been chosen, click on the ADD button to complete the process of adding the Welcome Page to the WebCT Homepage area.

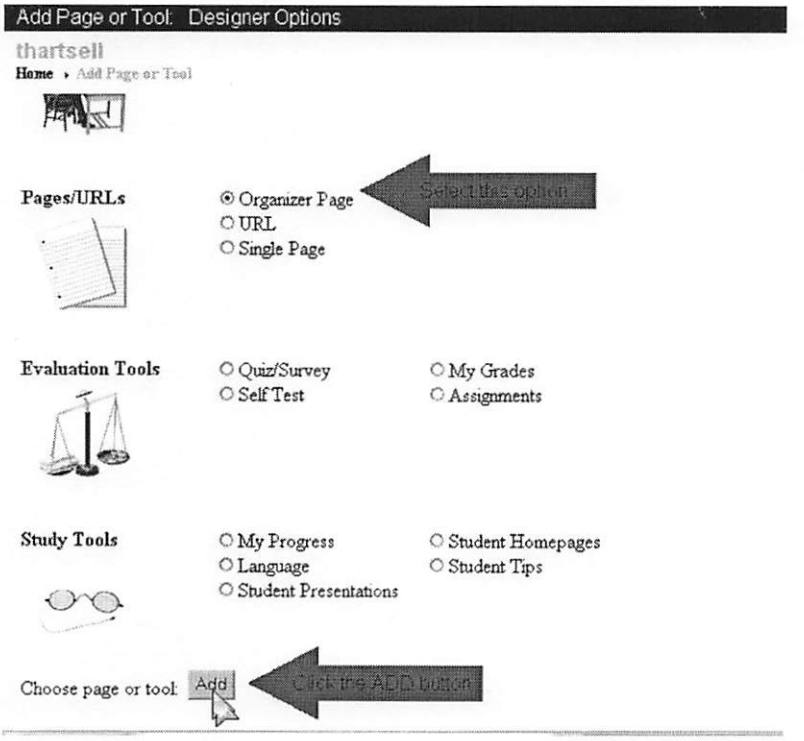


You should now see the Welcome Page icon and link on the Homepage of your WebCT course. In case you ever want to edit the text or change the icon, click on the radio button next to the page and then on *Edit Link*. Clicking on the GO button will take you to the next window to edit your links.



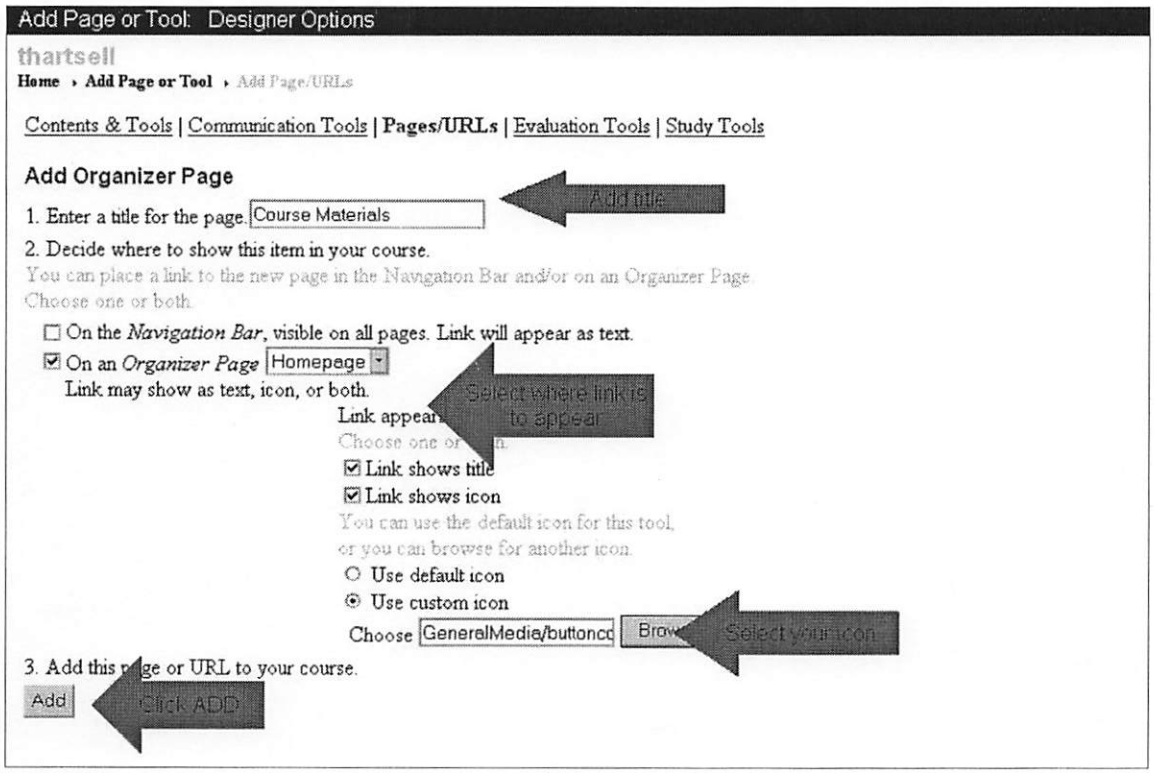
In this window you can change the text or wording of the hyperlink, change the icon, use a different file name (when you upload a revised version, you will have to select this option again), and change how the page opens. If you do not want to have the text link to be showing, just deselect the *Link shows title*.

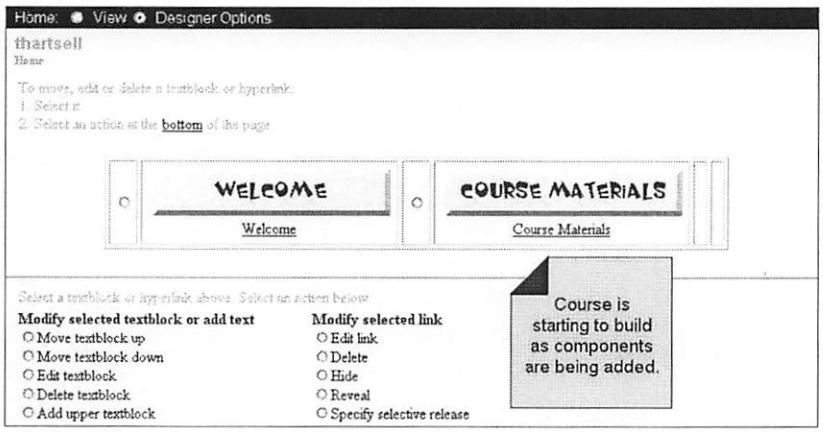




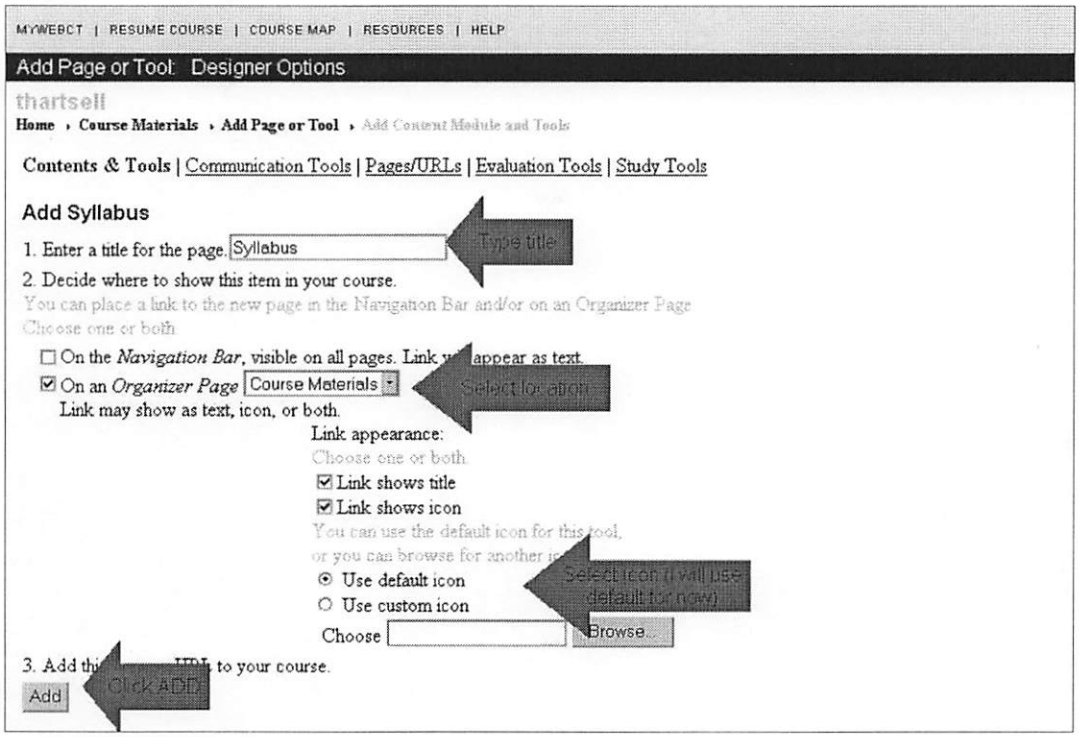
The Course Materials and Communications page should be added as an Organizer Page because you will be adding several pages beneath it. Both pages will follow the same steps. First, click on *Add Page or Tool* in the side navigation frame. Then, select the *Organizer Page* option and click ADD.

Repeat the process as with the Welcome Page. If you have not uploaded your icon to the Media folder, you will have to repeat the uploading process as with the Welcome Page (or just use the default icon for now). Repeat the process for the Communications Page.



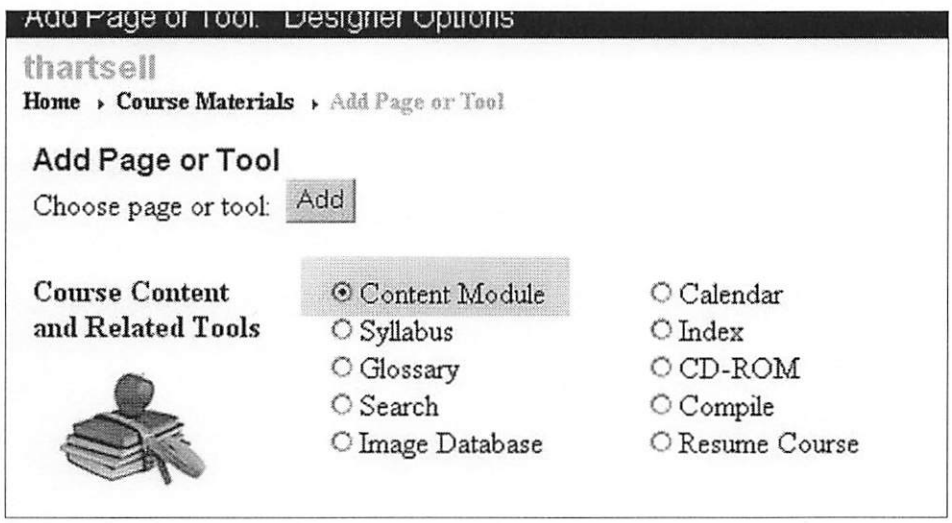


Because the Course Materials and Communications Page are organizer pages,you will have to create additional pages under each area. To do this, click on either the Course Materials or Communications page. Then, select the *Designer Options* view. You will need to add pages to that area. For course materials, you may need to add the syllabus, schedule, lessons, assignments, student progress, and anything else. So, click on **Add Page or Tool** and setup the **Syllabus** first. Under *Course Content and Related Tools* area select the Syllabus option and click GO. When you arrive to the window seen below, enter the required information.

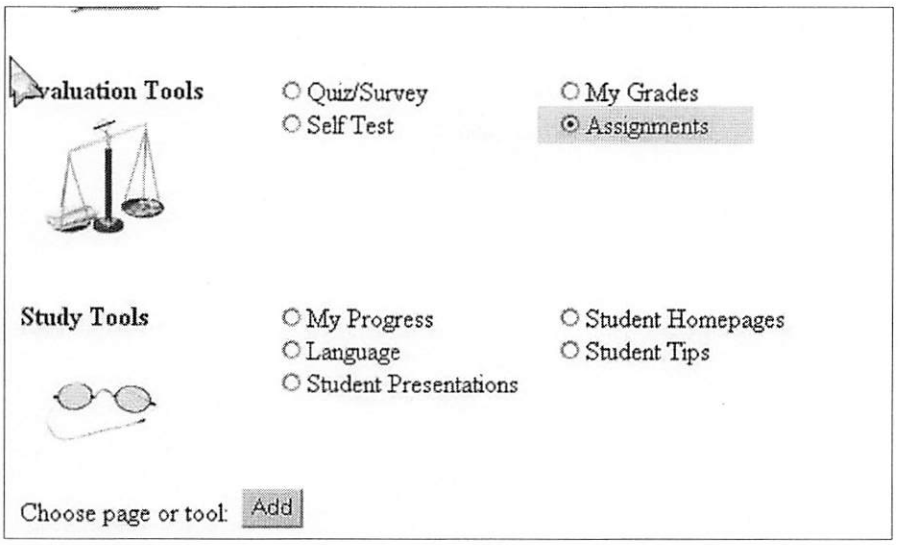


When you add the **Schedule**, use the *Single Page* option under Pages/URL's. Follow the same steps as the Welcome Page to complete this process.

Adding **Lessons** is a little different. When adding your lessons or notes page, select the option Content Module under the *Course Content and Related Tools* area. After that, the process is like completing the other pages.

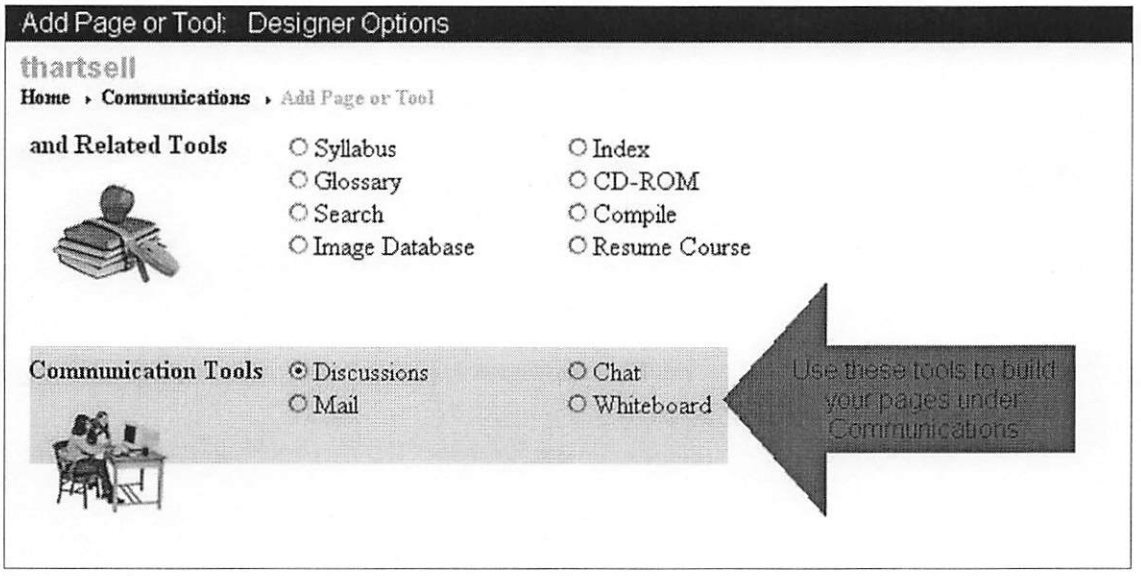


Adding **Assignments** is also a little different. When adding your Assignments page, select the option Assignments under the *Evaluation Tools* area. After that, the process is like completing the other pages.



The **Student Progress** page can be added to the Course Materials area the same way as the other pages. Just select the *My Progress* option under the *Study Tools* area.

The process of adding tools to the Communications area is just the same. Click on Communications in the Homepage and then select Designer Options view. When you **Add Page or Tools** to the Communications area, use the tools under the *Communication Tools* area (look at graphic below). I would use all four, but the whiteboard is optional. The process is similar to what you have completed for the other pages so refer to those notes about adding tools to organizer pages.



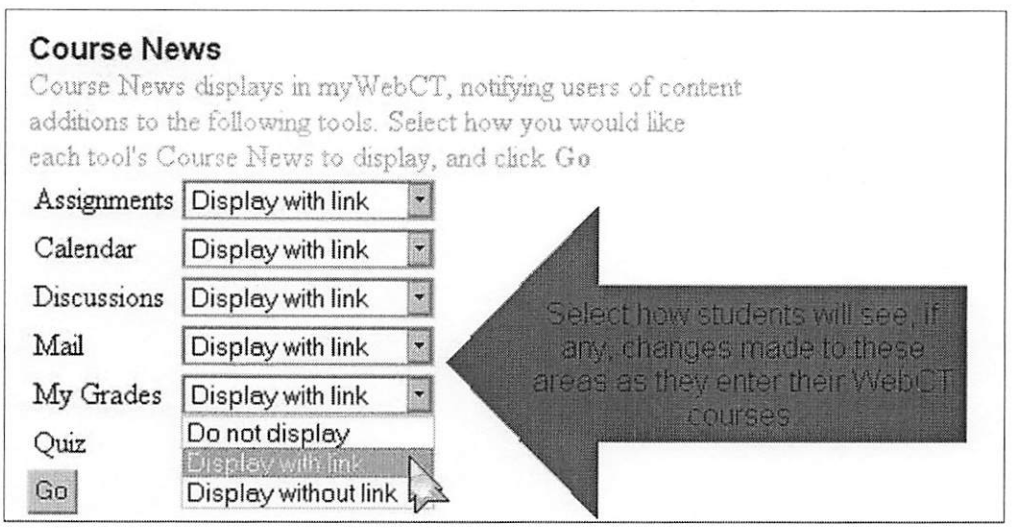
When you add the **Quiz/Exam** page, make sure you are back to the Homepage and not under the Course Materials Page or the Communications Page. Click the HOME link in the breadcrumb trail to return to the starting page. Then, click **Add Page or Tool**. Once you are there, go to the *Evaluation Tools* area and select the *Quiz/survey* option. Perform the same steps as the other main pages such as the Welcome Page and Course Materials page and you're on your way. If there are any other pages to add, this is a good time than any to add them.

Adjusting Page Properties

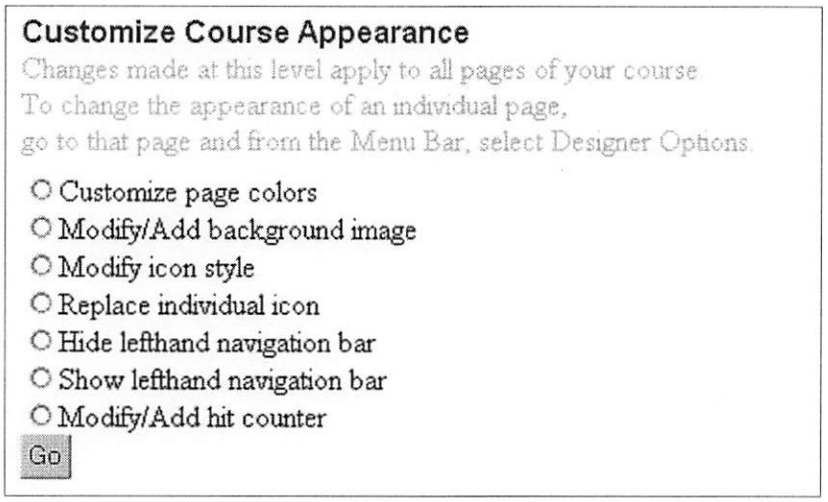
There are several things you can do in this area to make changes to the look of your course. These include changing course settings, course menu (which we have already done), creating and editing a Welcome Page (different from the one we did), and customizing course appearance and news.

Hopefully, you have already created the graphics to perform some of the functions mentioned in this section. However, more will be discussed later in the Graphics & Animations tutorial handout.

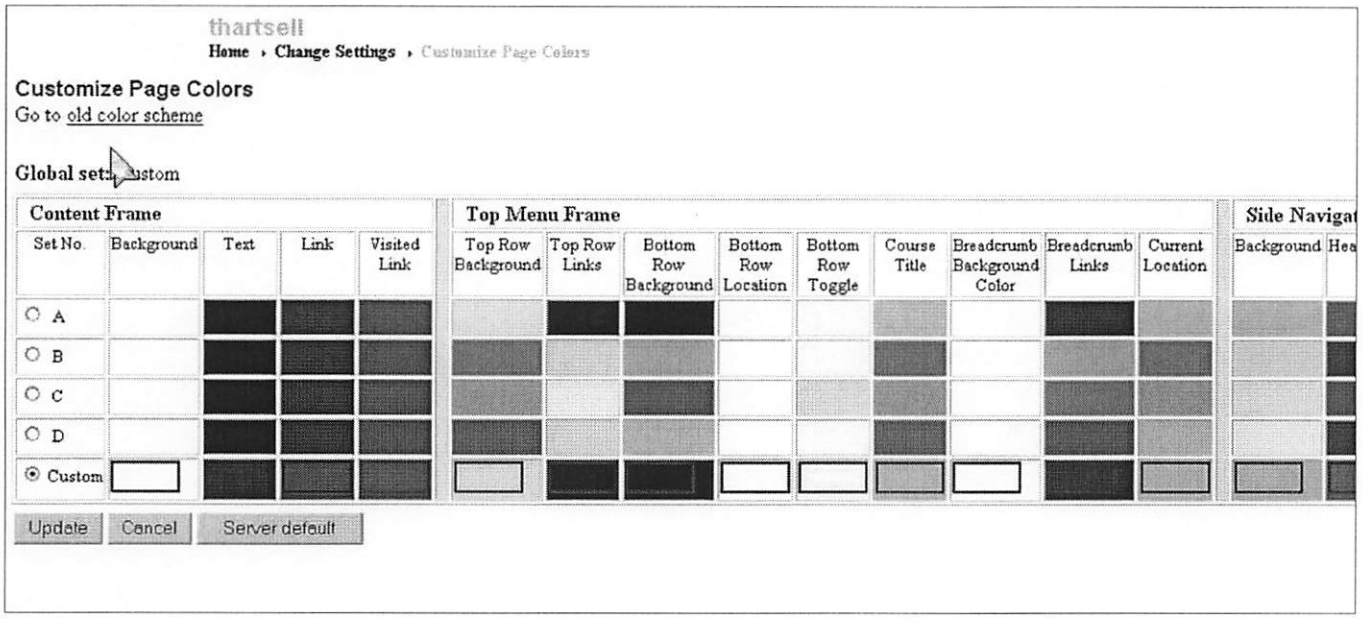
To get to the Settings page, click on the option **Change Settings** in the side navigation frame. The two areas that will be discussed more in detail are Course News and Customize Course Appearance. In the *Course News* section, changes that the instructor or students make to these six areas will be displayed as soon as students and instructors enter their WebCT courses. For instance, if someone adds a comment to a discussion thread, a note such as There are new discussions will be displayed. If someone sends you an e-mail, you will see a message such as There is new mail. These are also linked to the respective pages, so if you want to check the new e-mail, just click on that link and the e-mail feature will open up directly in WebCT. You can opt not to have these links displayed at all or just displayed without links. The choice is up to you, but I prefer to keep the links active because it saves me time in the end.



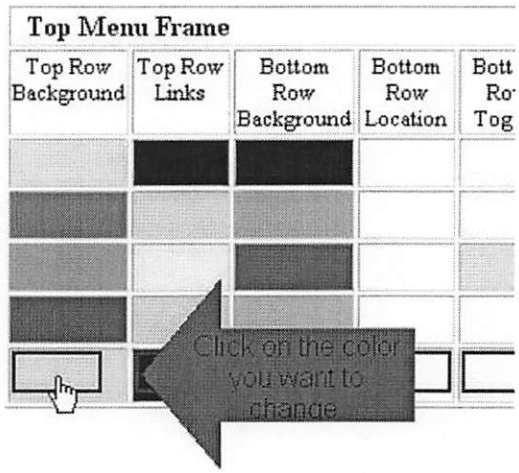
The *Customize Course Appearance* has several options in which you can change the design of the course. *Customize page colors* allows you to adjust the colors of the frames, text links, etc. in your WebCT course. When you find a background image you like (please do not use the WebCT backgrounds or just a plain color), you can upload that image to WebCT in *Modify/add background image*. *Modifying icon style* allows you to switch between different kinds of icons in WebCT. *Replace individual icon* is a quick place to replace existing WebCT icons with your own. The *Hide and Show left-hand navigation bar* is a more permanent solution and is not left at the hands of the users themselves. For instance, if you want the side navigation frame to always be invisible, select that option here. That way, the students will not have the choice to bring it back up. Finally, you can add a hit counter to the course in the *Modify/add hit counter* option. The features I would like to go into more detail are Customize page colors, Modify/Add background image, and Modify/Add hit counter.

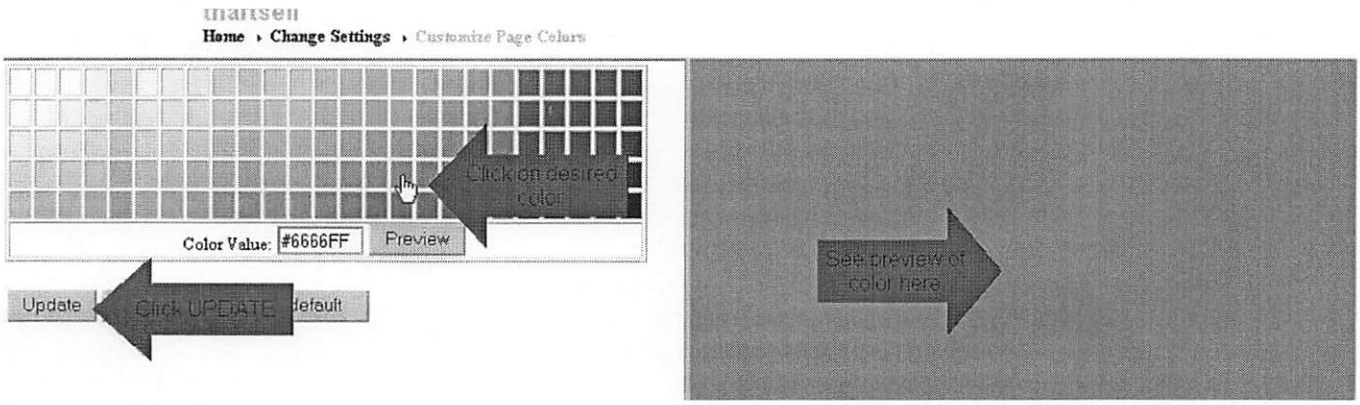


The **Customize page colors** gives you the opportunity to change the color of text, frames, etc. Click on that particular option and then click on the GO button. You have three main areas to change colors: Content Frame, Top Menu Frame and the Side Navigation Frame. You can select one of the pre-designed colors that you see below or customize colors according to your own design (e.g., on the IT 650 course I changed everything to look better with the Brown color scheme I had going). I would customize the colors of your course because you really can have a lot fun in doing so and your site will become more dynamic.

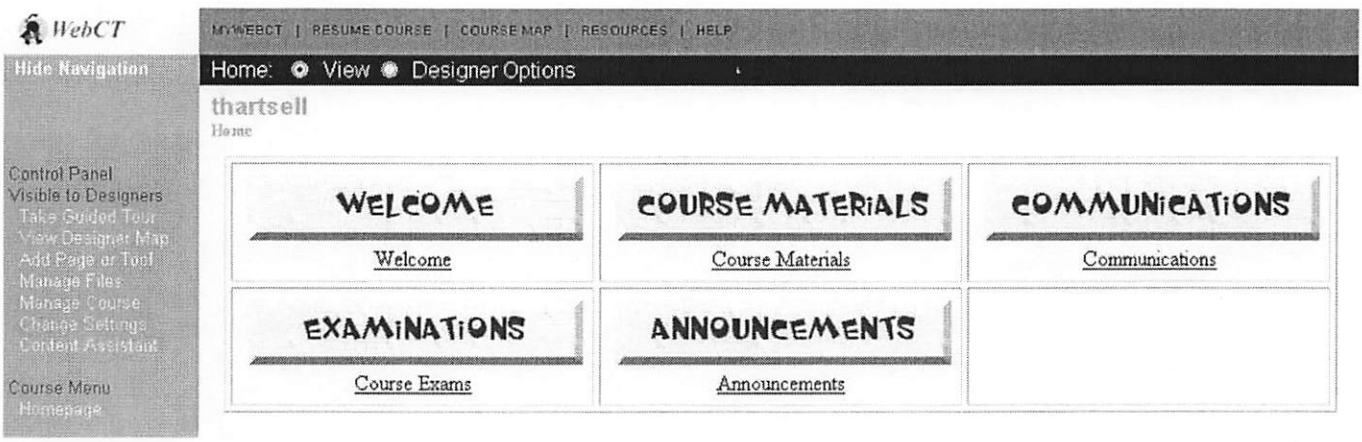


To change the colors, click on a color that you want to change. You will then be taken to another window. There, you can select a color from the color menu. You can preview the color in the right side. Once you find a color you want, click the UPDATE button.

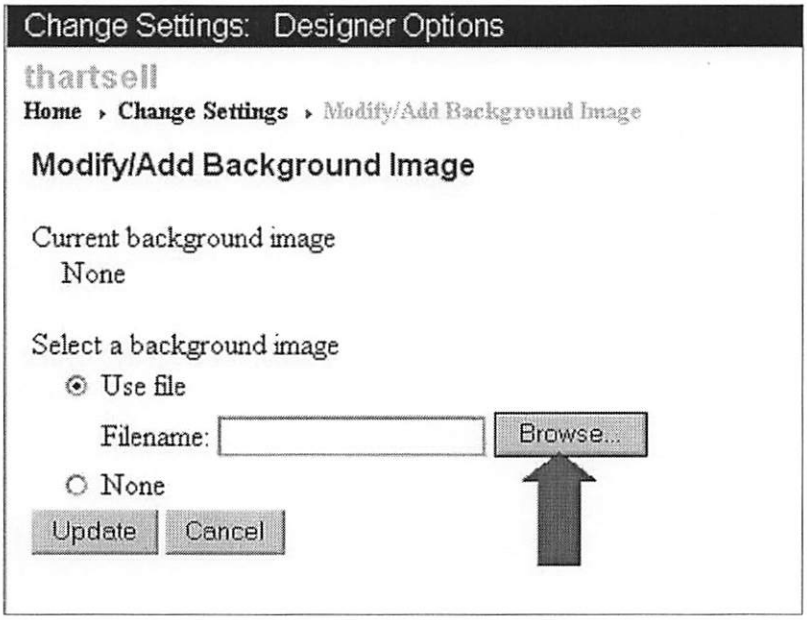




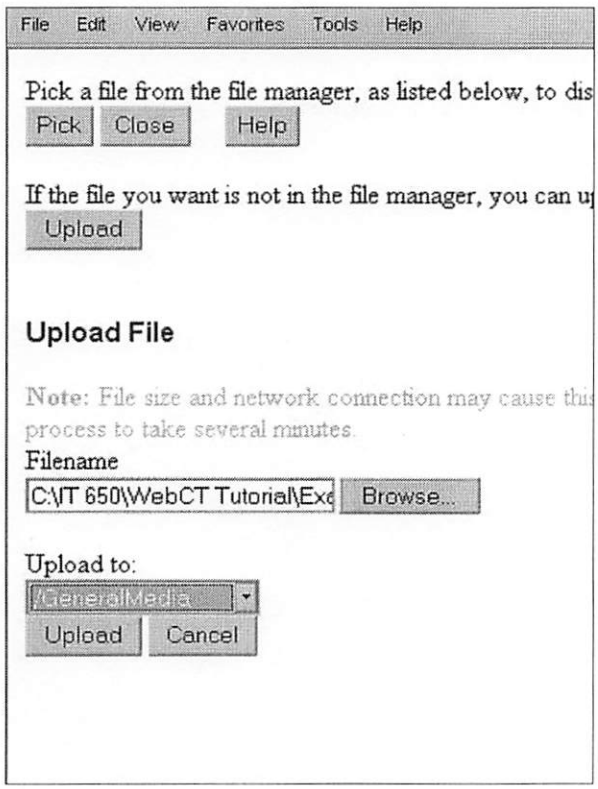
Now, the selected color of blue can be seen in the top row of my course. Before, the color for that row was beige. NOTE: Just remember that when you adjust color properties in the **Change Settings** area, the changes will **affect all of the pages** within the course. Adjust the colors for all of the elements as you see fit. You may want to wait till all of your graphics are in before performing color changes. This way, you can make sure that the colors match.

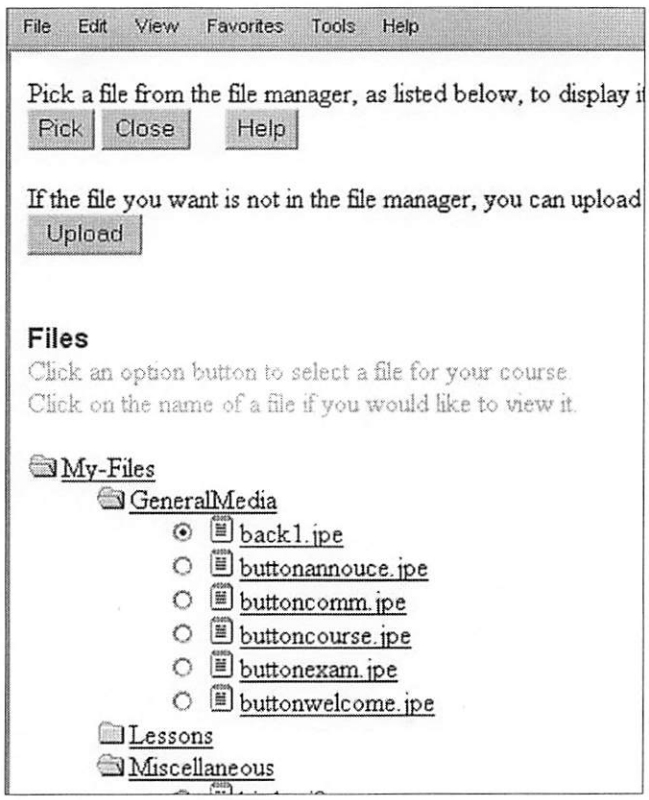


Next, we will add a background image. Click on the option *Modify/Add background image*.

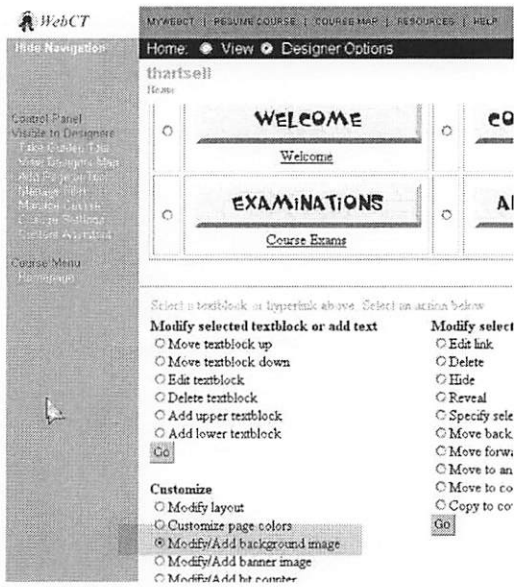


You will then need to upload or locate the background image. If you had not already uploaded the background image in the Media folder, you can do this now. Once uploaded, just locate and select the image, and click on PICK.

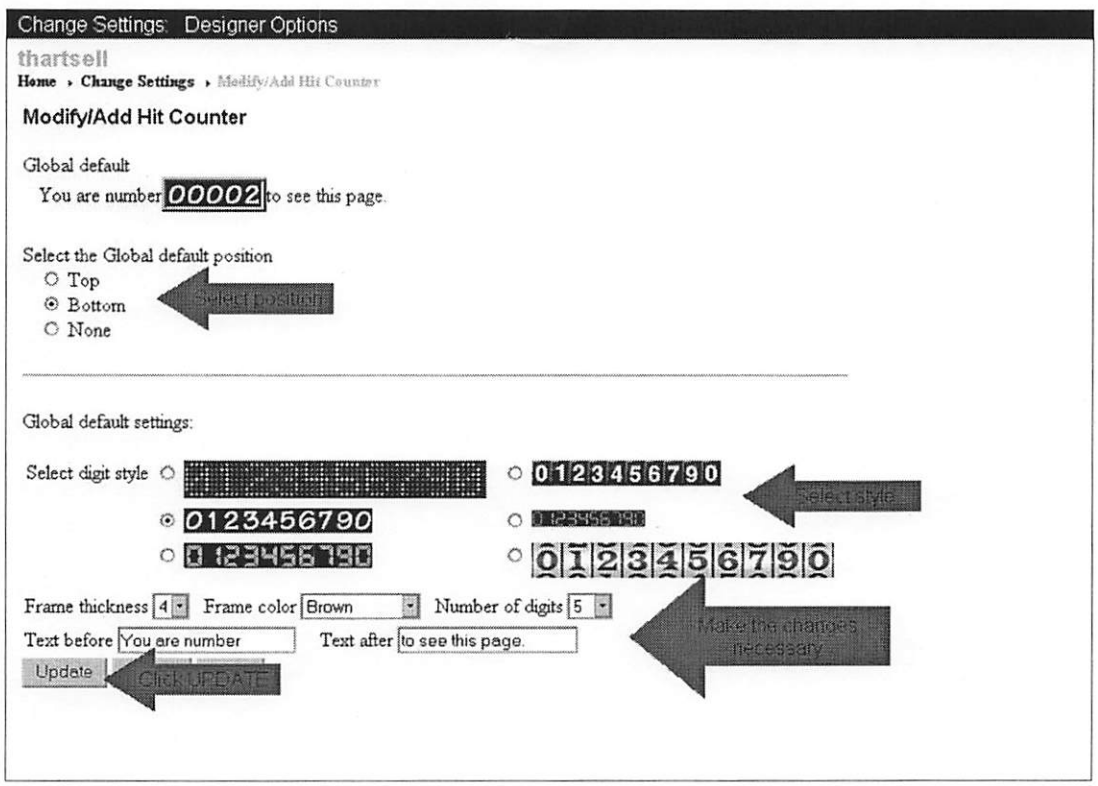




If your Homepage does not display the background image, you will have to add/remove the background for the Homepage individually. Most likely it is still using the WebCT background that it had for the template. The process is the same as before. You just need to edit the background on the Homepage itself. Scroll down until you see *Customize*. In that area, click on *Modify/Add background image*, and perform the same tasks as before.



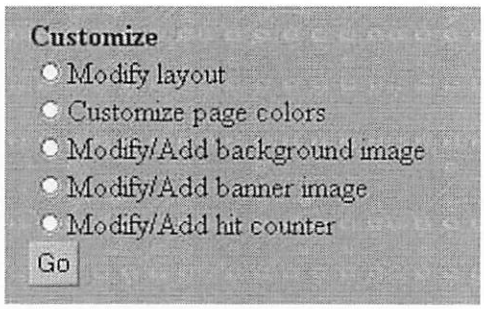
The other option you can add to all of your pages is a *Hit Counter*. If you want the Hit Counter to be shown only on the Homepage, then add the Hit Counter under that page only (similar to adding the background to the Homepage above). But, if you want the Hit Counter on all the pages, then perform this step under the **Change**



Settings area. To add a hit counter, click on the option *Modify/Add Hit Counter*. A new window will appear with some options. Chose the options you want and select UPDATE.

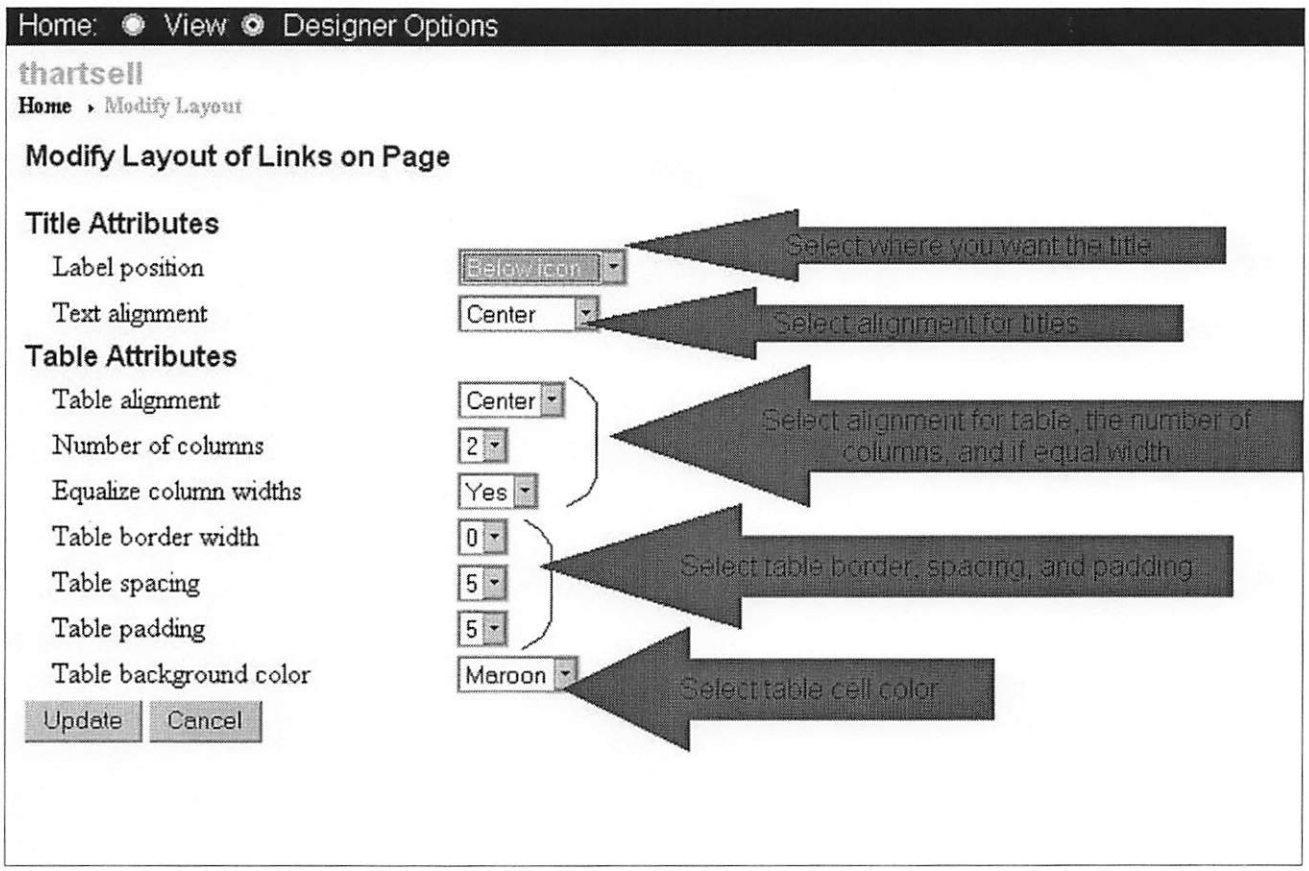
Modifying Individual Pages

Editing individual pages include modifying the layout, customizing page colors, adding/modifying a background image and banner image, and adding/modifying a hit counter. We have performed some of these functions under the **Change Settings** area, but there are some things that need to be completed on individual pages.



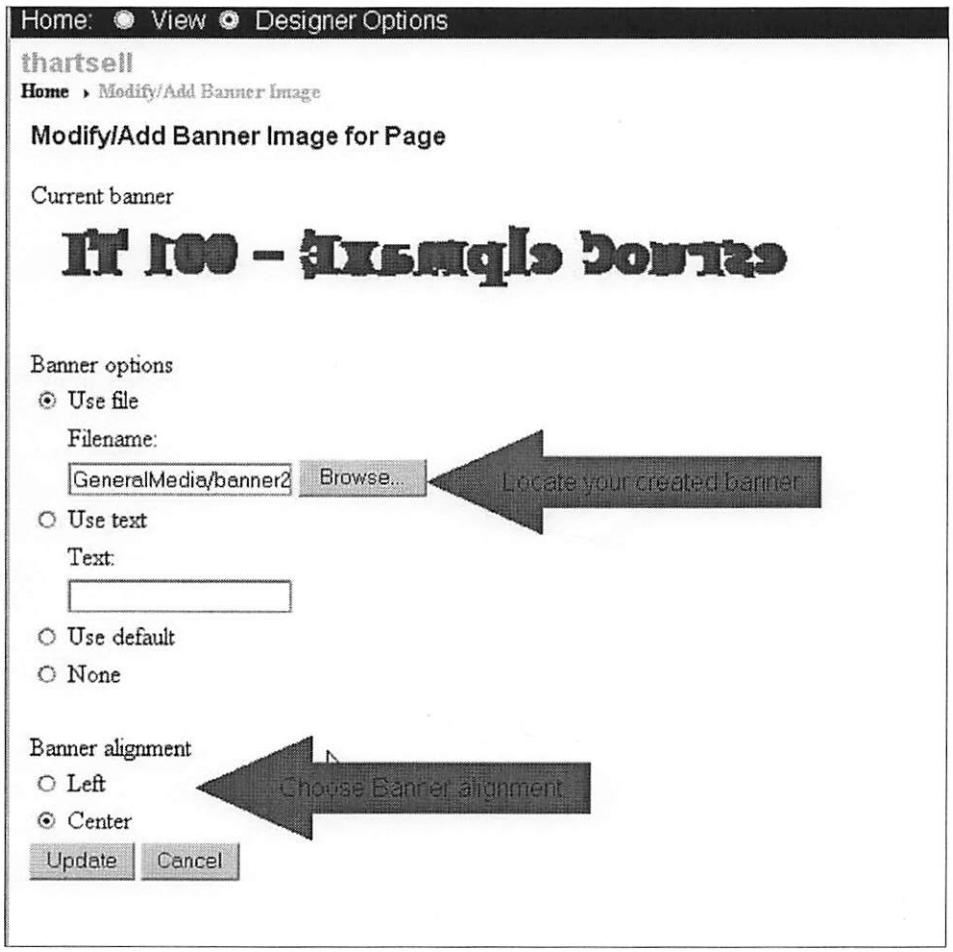
The first thing that may need adjusting is the *layout* (tables). This is especially true for the Homepage, Course Materials page, and Communications page. The process is the same for all three. So once you learn the steps, the process can be easily repeated.

To modify the layout, click on the option *Modify Layout*. I will begin with the Homepage, but as I said the process is the same regardless. Once there, select the options you want and click UPDATE.



Depending upon what you select, the appearance of your course table will be different. But, you will have to repeat the process for the other pages, especially for the organizational pages like the Course Materials and Communications.

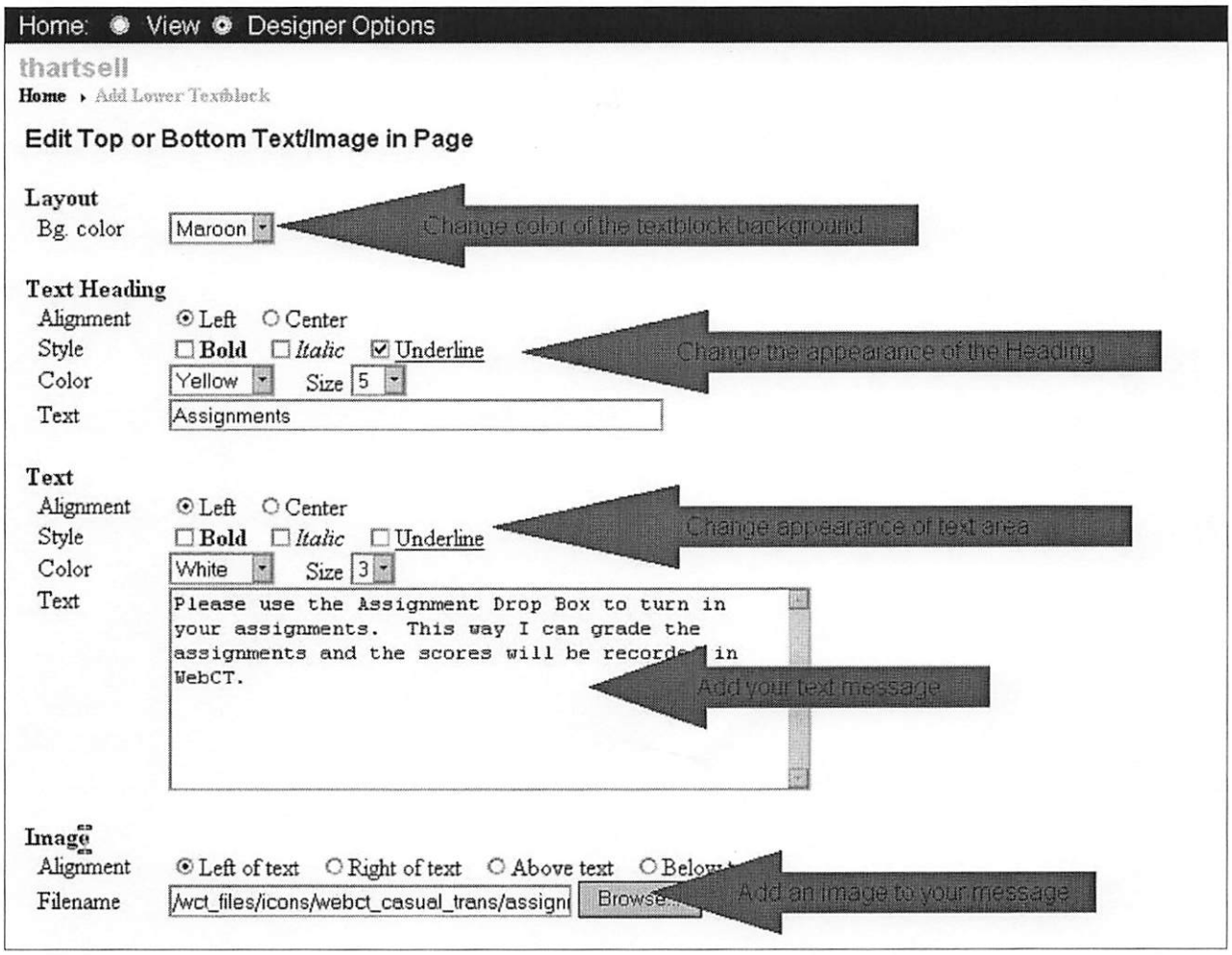
The other option that was not discussed before was *Modify/Add Banner Image for Page.* For each of your organizer pages and for individual areas (e.g., Chat) you will have to upload your created banners. I will upload a banner that I created for the Homepage. Again, the process is the same. So, learning this process will help you with the others. To add a banner, click on the *Modify/Add Banner Image* option. A new window will appear with options. Just BROWSE and select the banner you have on file and click on UPDATE. If the Banner has not been uploaded, you will have to perform that task now.



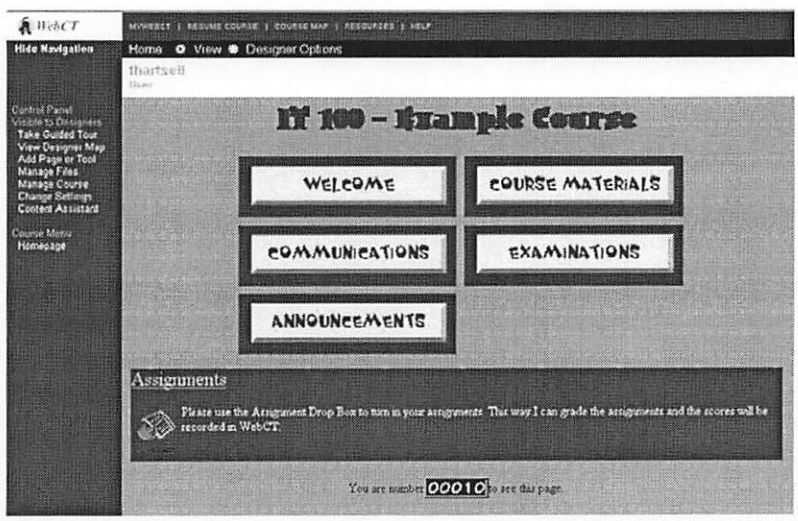
Using Textblocks

Textblocks are a good to way introduce announcements to the class. However, they should not be overused (as I have discovered in one of my online courses I taught) because students will become confused with all of the various methods of communicating announcements. But, using textblocks once in awhile is a good idea. You will be adding the textblocks to the Homepage, so if you are not there go that page now.

To create a textblock, go to area called *Modify selected textblock or add text*. Click on either Add Upper Textblock or Add Lower Textblock. A new window will appear with several options. You can change the background color of the block, alter the appearance of the text itself, and even add an image to accommodate the text. The graphic on the next page shows what can be done.



When you have made the adjustments just click on the ADD button to insert the textblock and view your page.



Creating an Online Course with WebCT

CONTENTS

- Changing Icons
- Using personal graphics
- Using WebCT Graphics
- Adding Banners

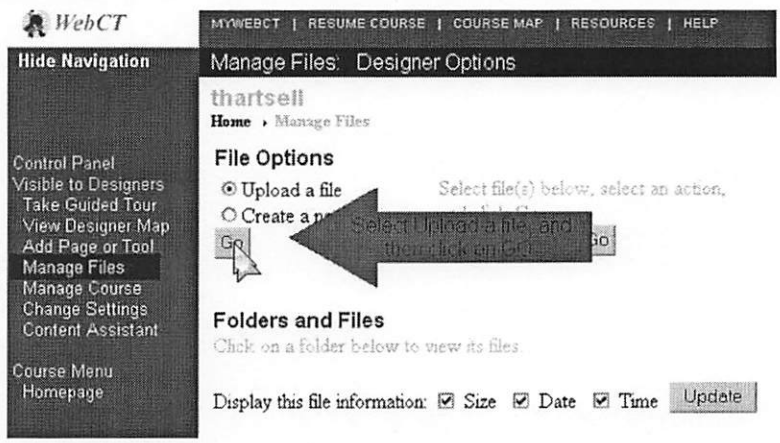
Graphics & Animations

Changing the appearance of WebCT courses can easily be performed by using different types of graphics and animations. Depending upon the course topic and target audience, the WebCT environment could accommodate the subject matter and its learners by the use of appropriate graphics. There are many places online that you can obtain free graphics and buttonmakers/textmakers. Although you can use some of the graphics contained within the WebCT-Files, you will still need to create and use graphics of your own or those obtained from software/online sites. In this tutorial handout, graphics and animations will be discussed in terms of how to change icons, create personal graphics, use the graphics available in WebCT, and add created banners to pages.

Changing Icons

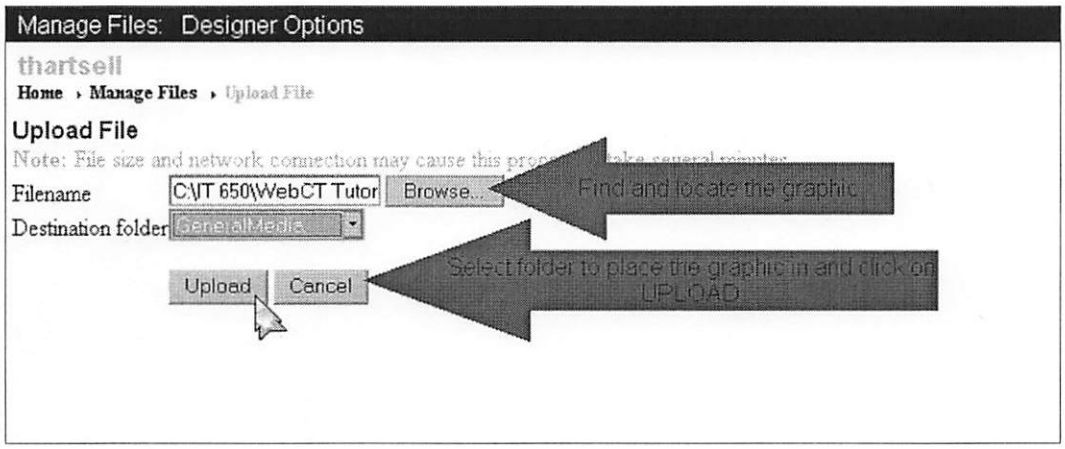
If you have already set up your pages (e.g., Lessons under the Course Materials section), you may have chosen to use the current default icons. However, you will eventually need to substitute these default icons with either those found outside of WebCT or from within WebCT. **Do not remain with the default icons**. I would like to see some animation in your sites, so this may be a good place than any to find some animated gifs and replace them with the static default icons.

Changing icons (e.g., WebCT default icons to animated gifs) is actually quite simple. You can first upload all of your icons/graphics to the Media folder located under My-Files, or you can perform the upload function for each icon you change. Either way is acceptable, but uploading your graphics at once to the Media folder may be easier.

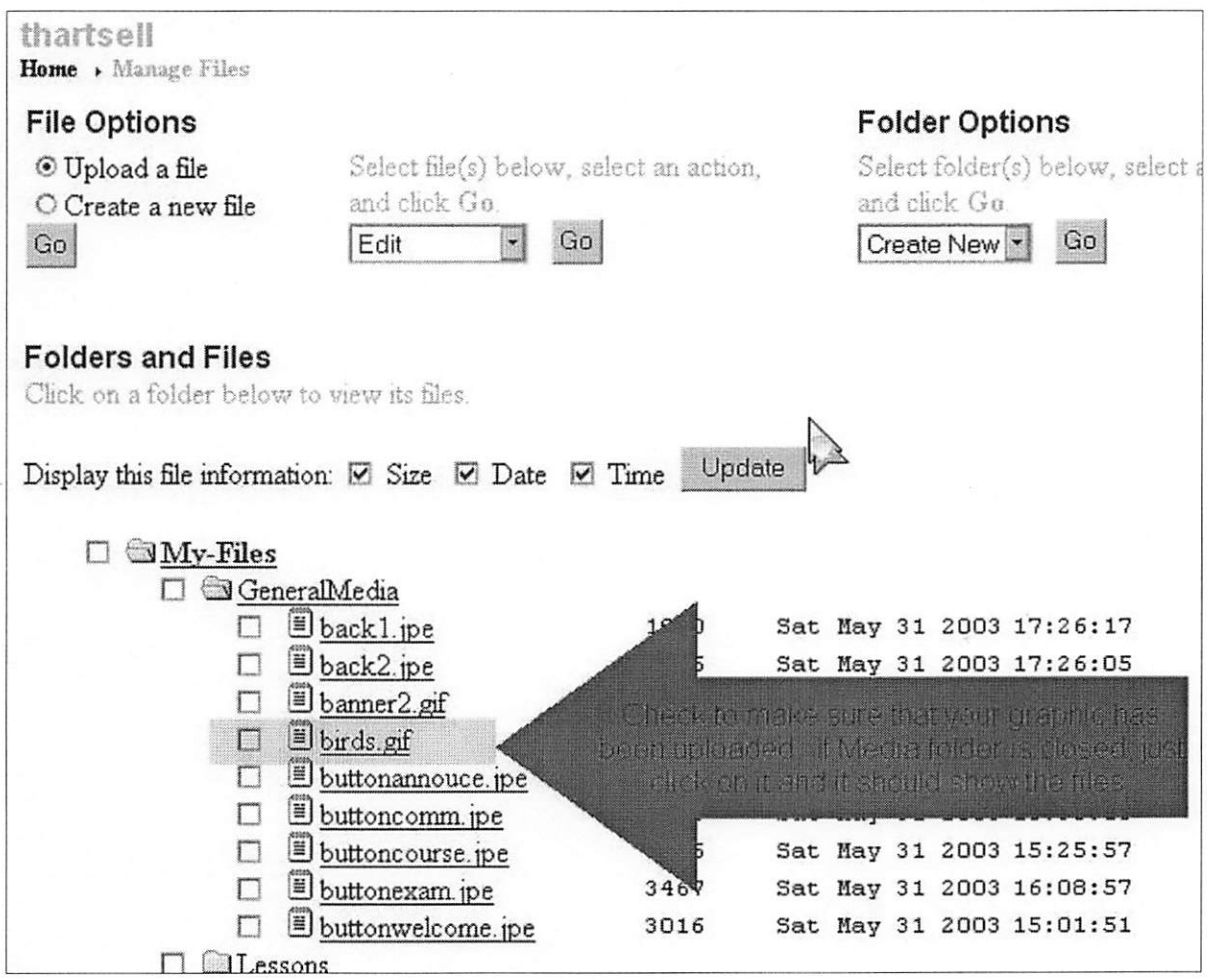


As a review, when you want to upload graphics to the Media folder, click on **Manage Files** in the side navigation frame. NOTE: You will have repeat these procedures (except for clicking on Manage Files) for each icon to be uploaded.

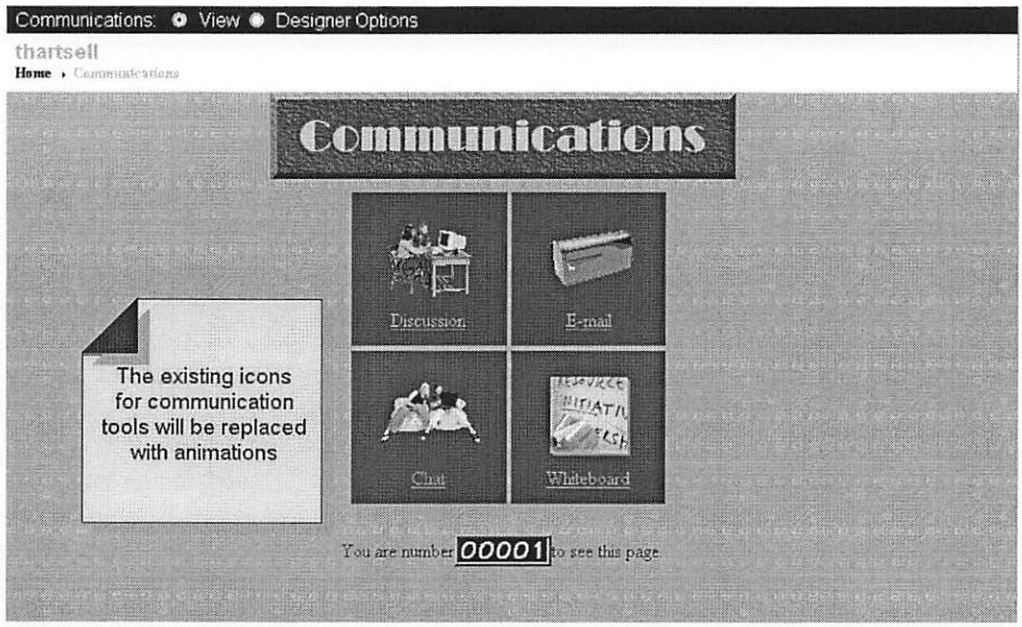
Go to File Options and select *Upload a file*. Click on GO and you will be taken to another window.



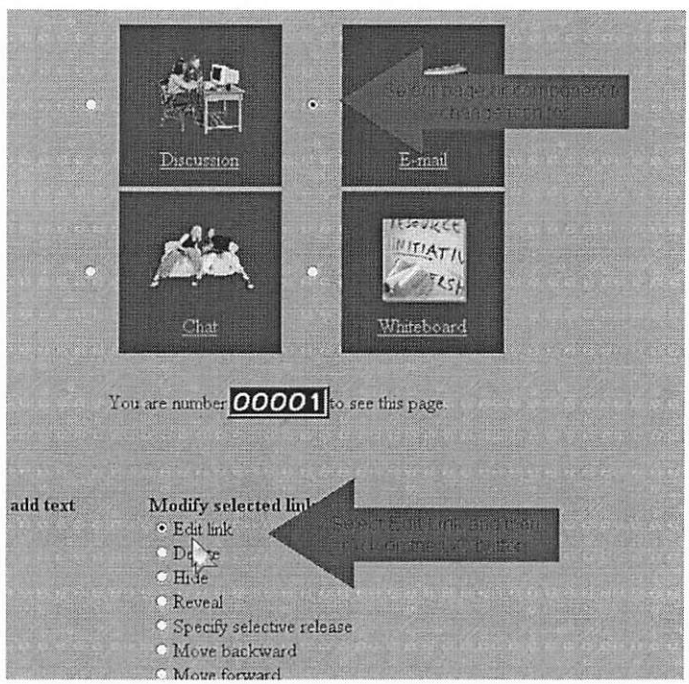
In this window, browse and locate the graphic on your computer. Select the folder in which you want to save the graphic to (most likely your Media folder) and click on UPLOAD. Your graphic should now be in the Media folder. Then, check to see if the graphic has been uploaded successfully.



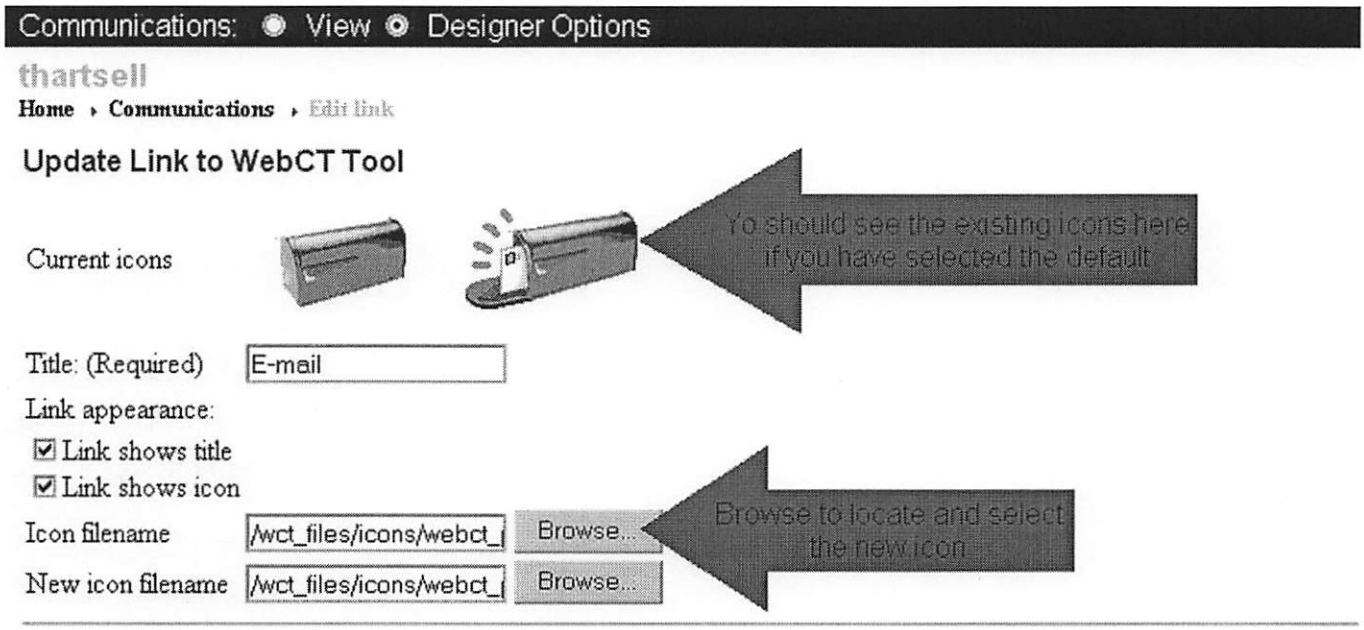
If you prefer not to upload all the graphics at once in the Media folder, you can change the icon page by page. Go the page in which you want to replace existing icons. I will go to my Communications page and replace the icons already there for the four components.



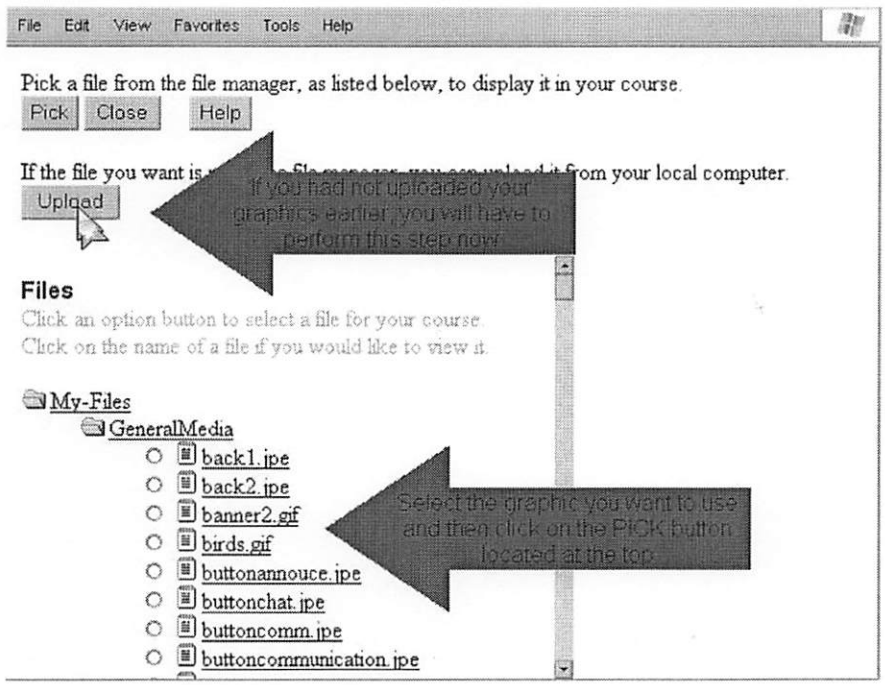
To replace icons already in existence, click on *Designer Options* view. Click on the radio button next to the component. Scroll down until you see the *Modify selected link* area and select the option *Edit link*. Click on the GO button to proceed.

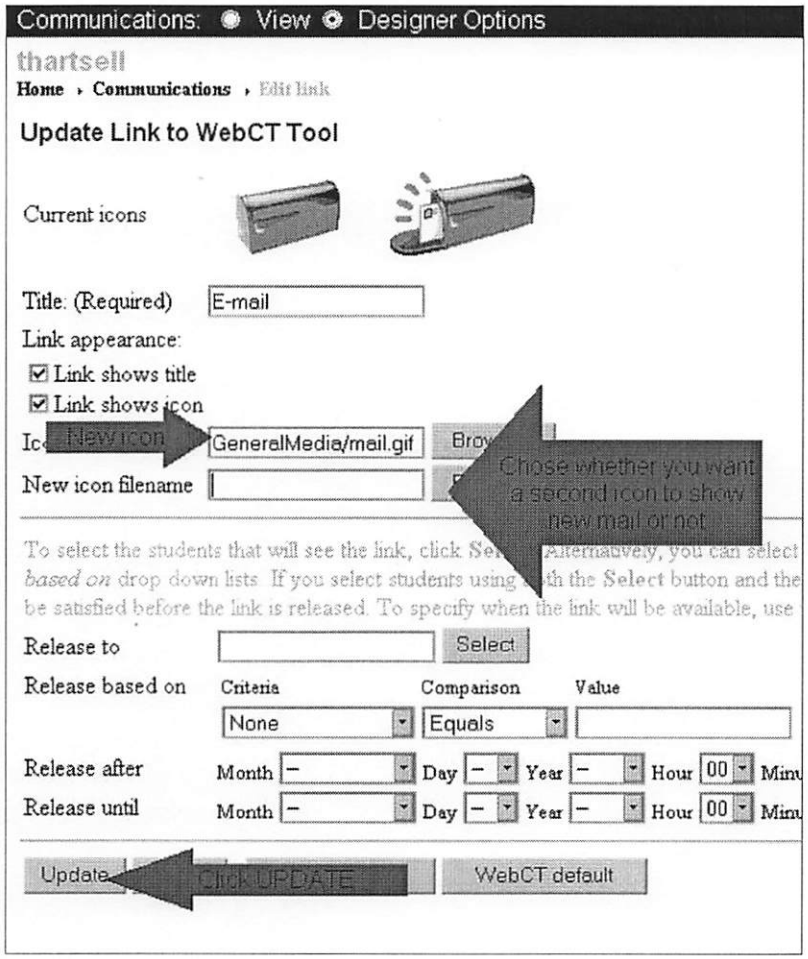


When you arrive to the *Update Link to WebCT Tool* page, you should see an image of the existing icon(s) (if you have already set up the pages with default icons). Click on the BROWSE button next to the *Icon filename* dialog box. NOTE: If you do not want the text link to show underneath the icon, deselect the Link shows title area. This would be so for those who are using buttons instead of graphic icons. But, if you are using graphics, then you should keep the text links.



Select the icon you want to use. If you had not uploaded the graphic, then you will have to upload it now. Just click on UPLOAD and BROWSE your computer for the graphic. If you had already uploaded all your graphics, then simply chose the graphic you want from the Media folder and click on PICK.





You will return to the window called *Update Link to WebCT Tool.*

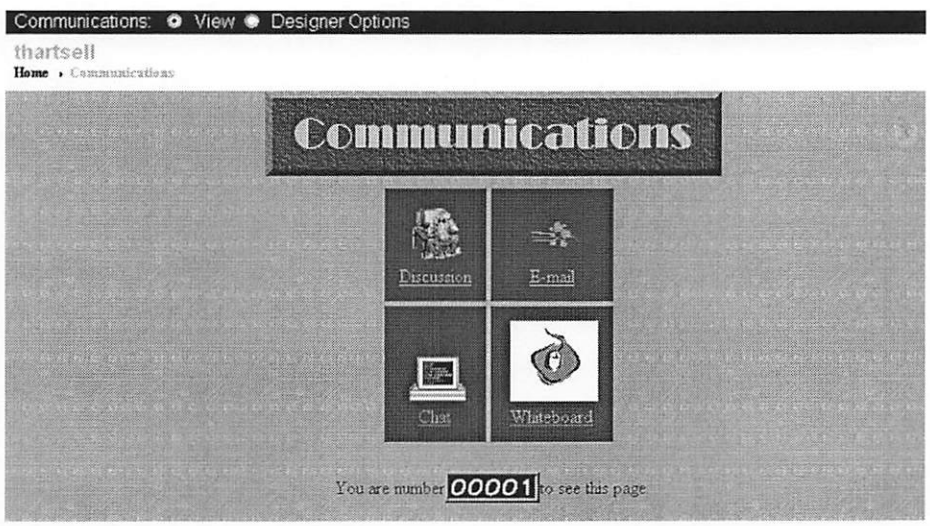
If you want to change the title of the link, this is the place to do that. Just type in the new title to the right of the *Title (Required)* area.

You should see the filename of the new graphic chosen in the *Icon filename* area. Again, if you do not want the text link to show, deselect the *Link shows title.*

If you do not want to have a second icon to be showing when new mail is in the mailbox, then leave the *New icon filename* space blank. Having a second icon may be useful. I like having that option because it helps me see whether I have new mail. But, for this example, I chose not to have the second icon.

When you have made all of the appropriate changes, click on the UPDATE button. When you return to the Communications page, the new icon will appear.

You will have to repeat this process for all of the pages and tools that have existing default icons. The graphic below shows the new icons (you cannot see the animations in these icons) for my Communications page.



Using Personal Graphics

There are many places to obtain graphics. Some graphics and animations can be found on CD-ROMs. Other graphics may be obtained online. In the first handout, I mentioned several Web sites in which you can obtain free graphics, animations, buttonmakers, etc. to be used in your course Web site. WebCT accepts animated gifs quite nicely. So, I encourage you to have at least one thing animated in your site.

I will repeat the Web sites I have found useful:

- Absolute Background Textures Archive http://www.grsites.com/textures/ (this is where I got the background and buttons used in my IT 642 course; program is very easy to use)
- Cooltext.com http://cooltext.com/ (this site makes nice buttons and logos, but it take a long time for the buttons to be created; slow site)
- CoolArchive http://coolarchive.com/ (nice site; has button makers, logo generators, animations, backgrounds, etc.)
- Flaming Text http://www.flamingtext.com/start5.html (good site to create banners)
- Scream Design http://www.andyart.com/free.html (just has a lot there)
- Animation Factory http://animationfactory.com (get some free animated gifs; I used these in IT 650)
- 3D Textmaker http://www.3dtextmaker.com/ (nice place to get fancy text; I used this for the text banners in IT 650)

These Web sites are VERY easy to use. Mostly, you just follow the on screen directions and you are there. All of the graphics I obtained for my IT 100 – Example Course came from these sites. Of course, I used three sites more than anything else (MediaBuilder, Absolute Background Textures, and Animation Factory). I just recently found a nice animation site that is easy to follow. The URL for that site is: http://www.gifanimations.com/.

Most of the graphics online can be saved by right-clicking on the image. After you right-click the image, select the option Save Picture As... or Save Image As... option. Why there are two different text options, I do not know. Save the images to your disk and can change the Filename. In some sites, you cannot change the filename. For instance, if you use Absolute Background Textures Archive, save the images with the filenames it gives you. Then, go back later to rename the filenames on your own computer. Why you have to perform this extra task I do not know. If you use the Animation Factory's free animated gifs, first click on the animations you want and you will be given three options in which to save the animations: black background, white background, or transparent background.

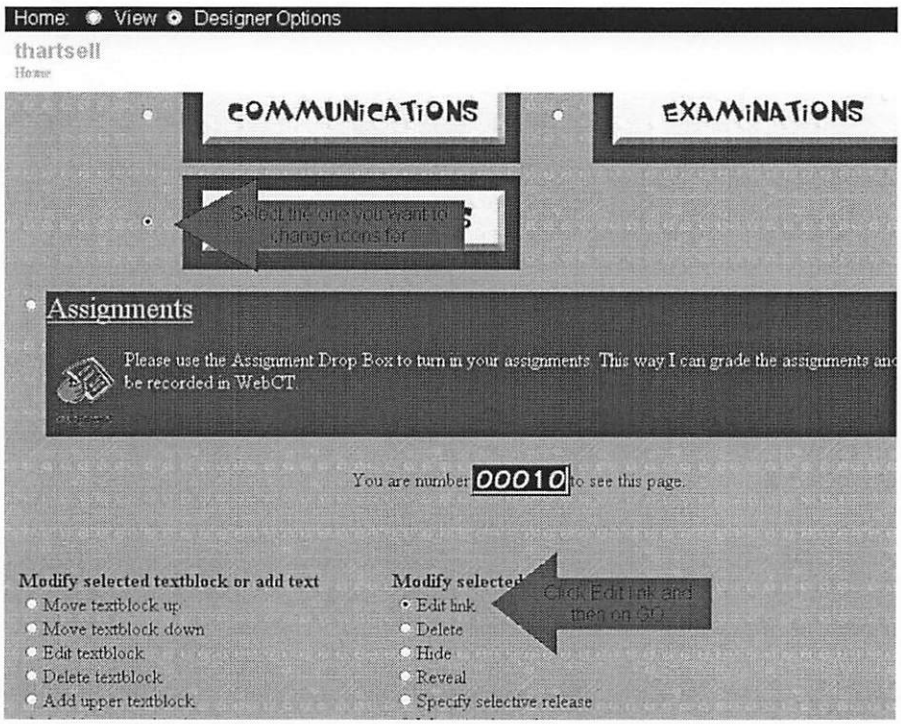
Other than that, just go into these sites and explore. It is not that hard to create your own graphics or save graphics from these online sources. Most of them will allow you to use the graphics freely for personal purposes. Some will require you to only tell the programmers if you are using their graphics. So, read the Licensure Agreement for these sites.

Using WebCT Graphics

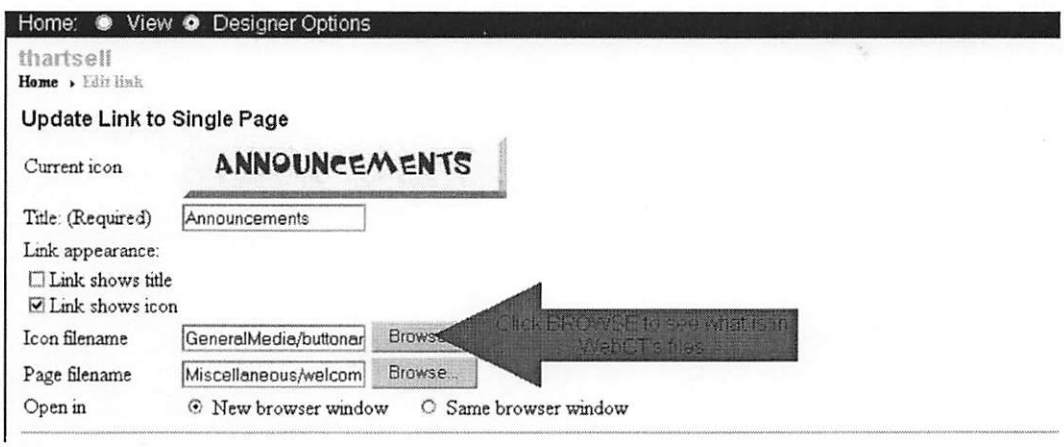
WebCT also provides graphics of its own. You can use some of these graphics (not the defaults), but I still expect you to utilize some from outside sources. You can do a combination on pages such as half from WebCT-Files and half from your own Media folder. But, I do expect a balanced weight in terms of where you are getting the graphic files. Banners, however, are to be created outside. I do not want you to use the WebCT banners.

To use WebCT graphics, you would simply go to the WebCT-Files area and look through the various folders. WebCT has folders for backgrounds, banners, clip art, icons, etc. Peruse through them by clicking on the folders, and then on individual files. WebCT will provide a preview of the image to the right side so you can see what the image will look like.

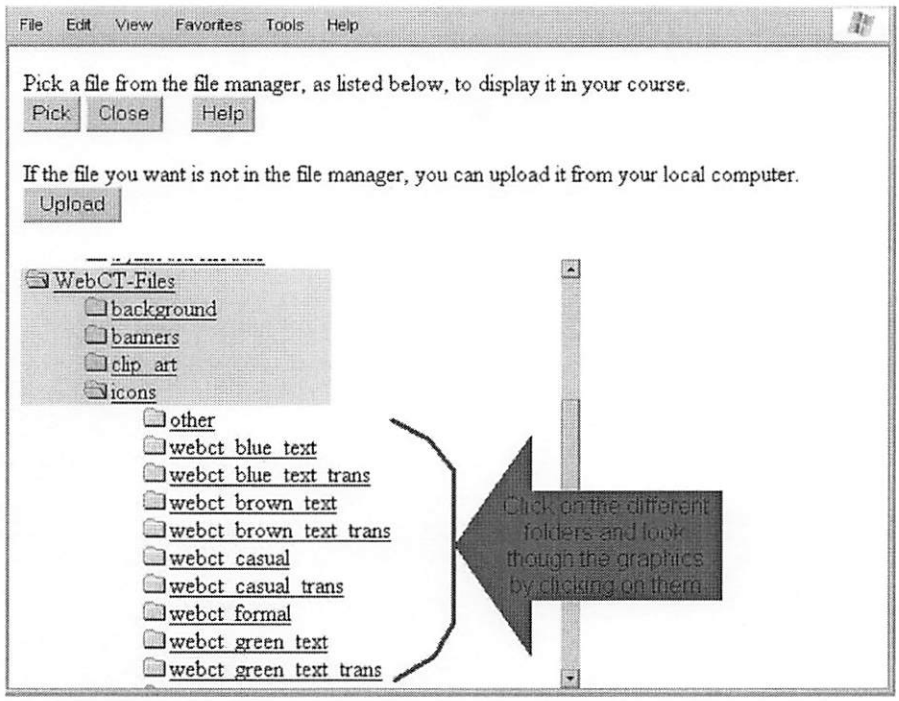
Let us change an existing icon and replace it with one of WebCT's icons. I will use my Homepage because that way you can see the difference. Click on the *Designer Options* view and click on one the radio button next to the icon you want to edit. Scroll down to the *Modify Selected Link* area. Click on the *Edit link* option and then on GO.



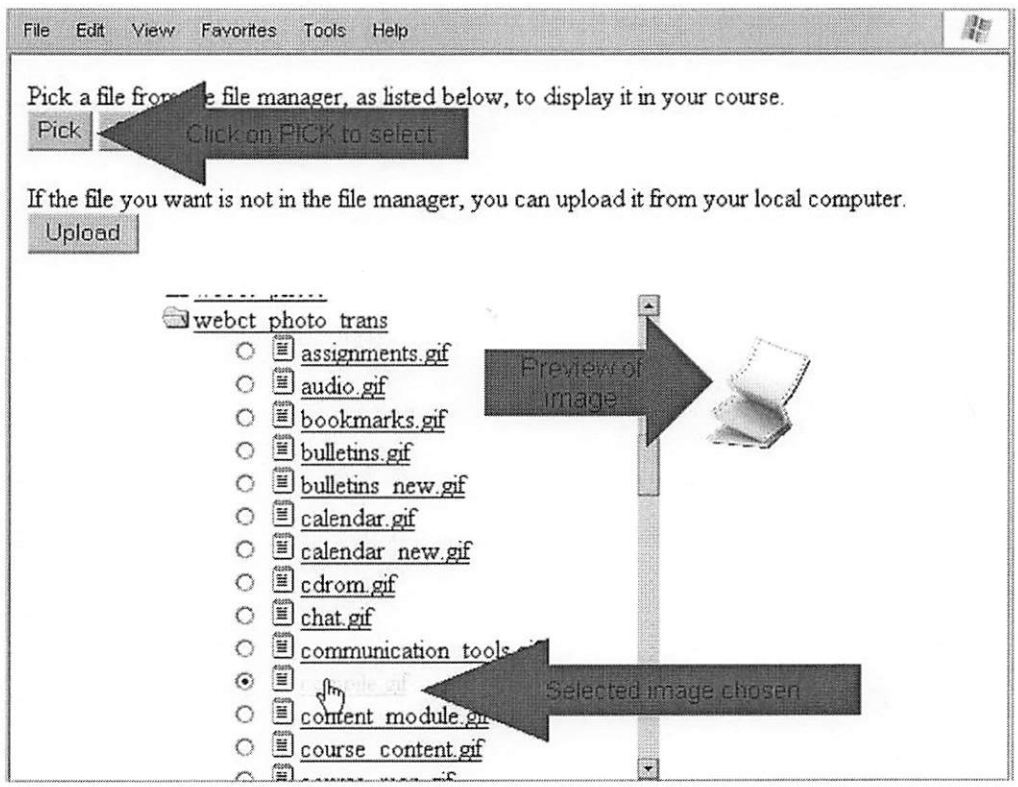
In the new window, go to *Icon filename* and click on the BROWSE button.



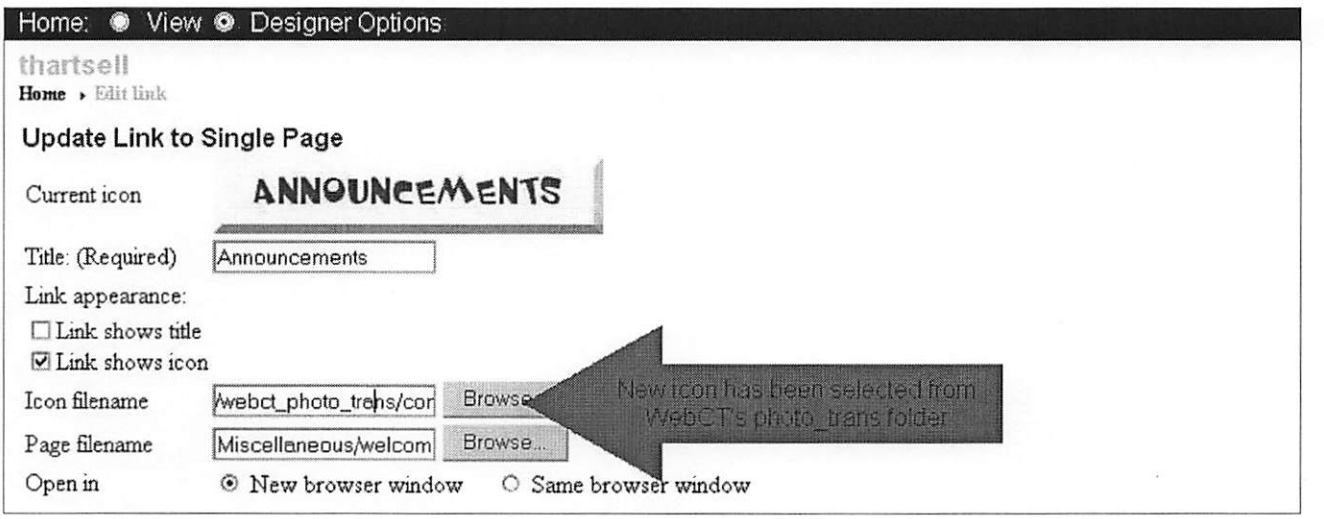
In the WebCT Browser window, scroll down until you see WebCT-Files. There should be several folders underneath. Look for the folder called *Icons* and click on that folder.



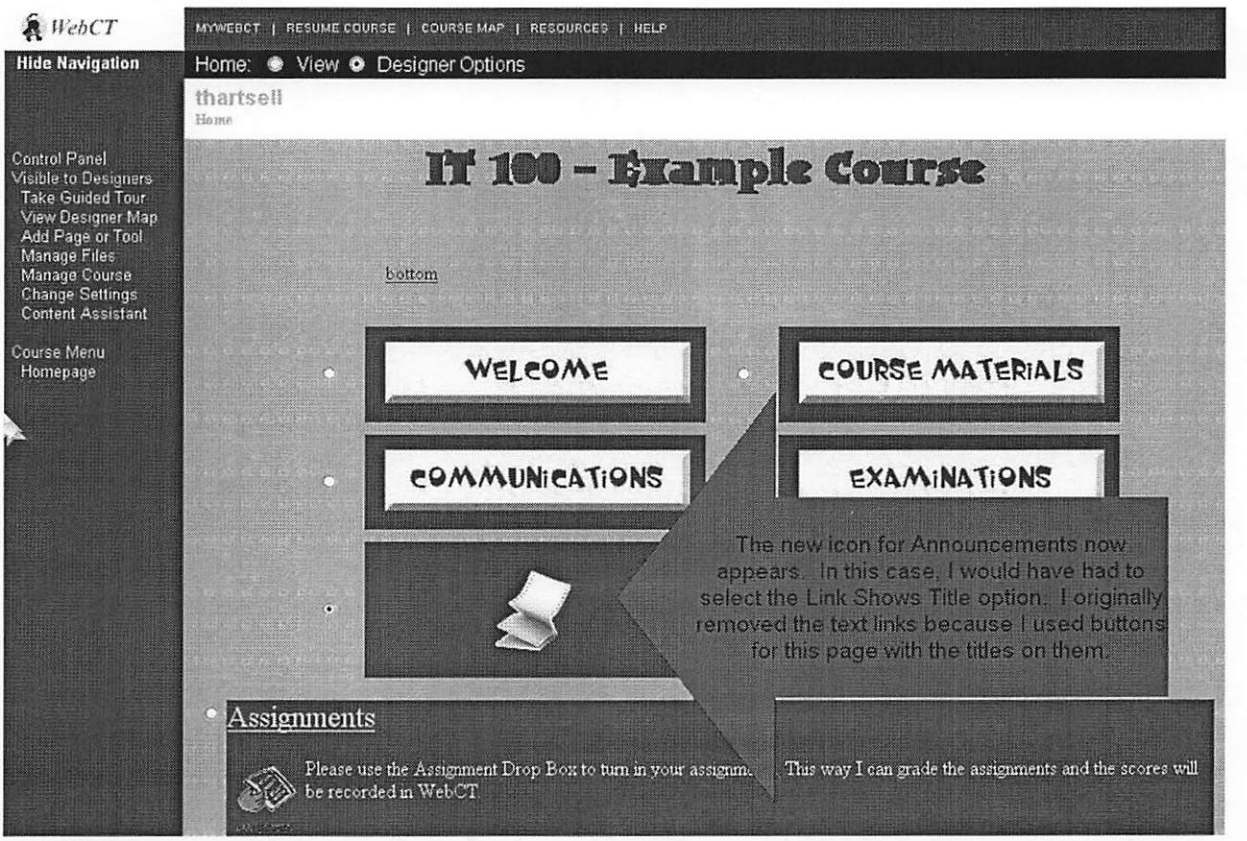
To peruse through the different graphics, just open the sub-folders by clicking on them, and then click on the individual files. When you click on the graphic files, you will see a preview of the graphic to the right. Once you find one that you like, make sure it is selected (radio button is checked) and click on PICK.



Once you select the icon you want from the WebCT-Files, make sure that the icon is listed under the *Icon filename* area as indicated below. If the icon is there, click on the button UPDATE to make the changes.

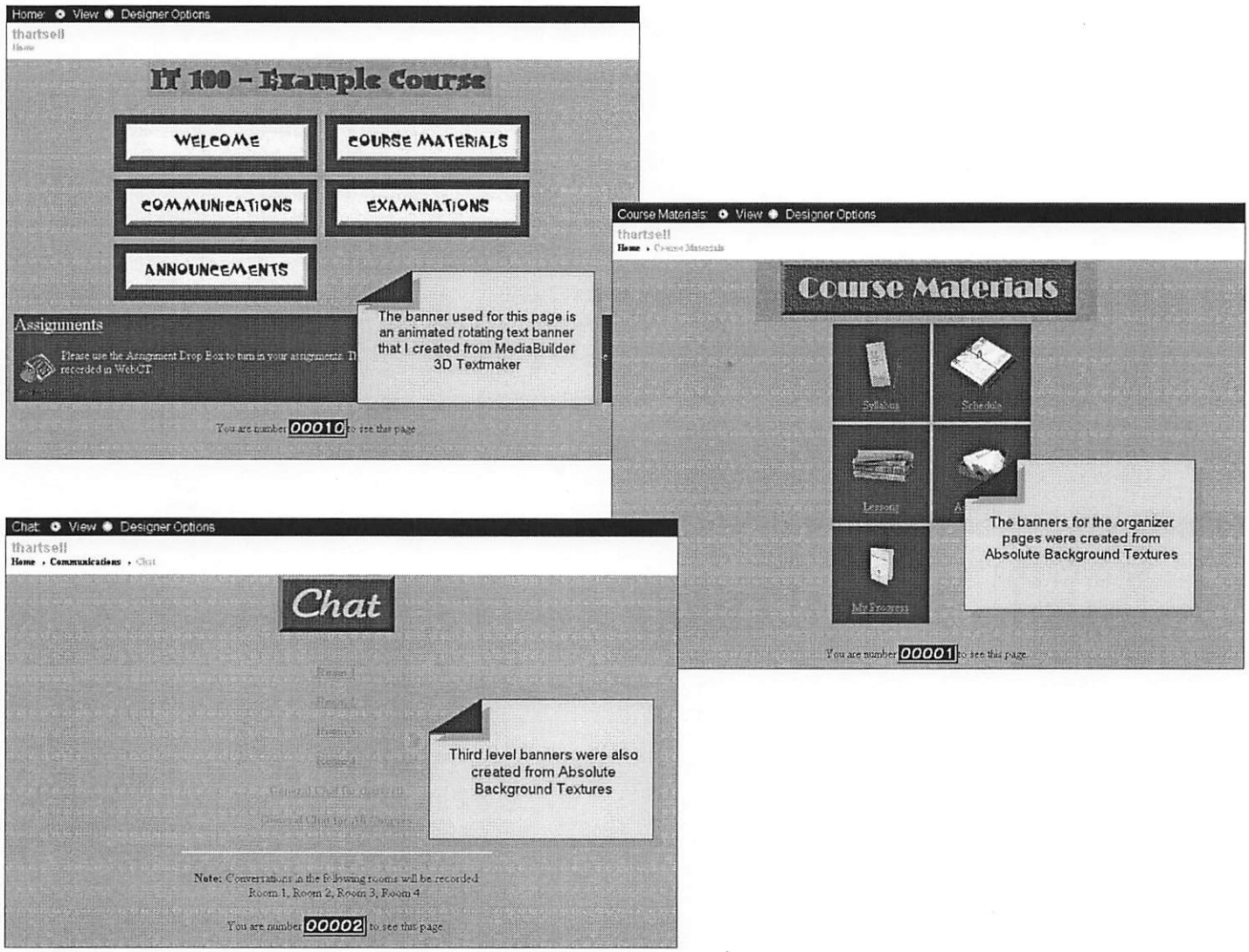


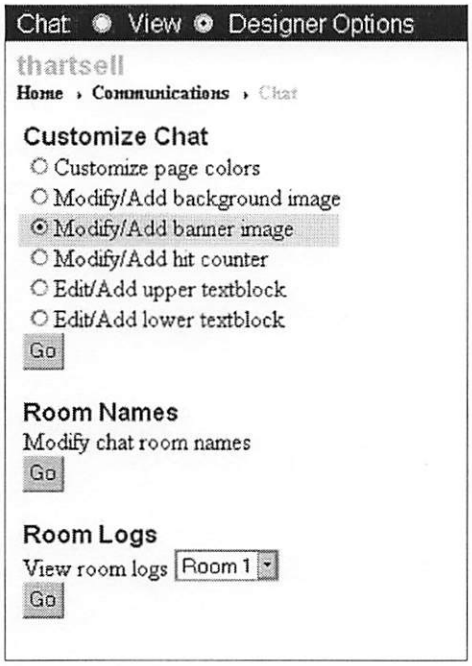
The new icon selected should have replaced the old one. To change icons on other pages or to use WebCT's graphics collection, repeat the process for all other pages in your course site.



Adding Banners to Individual Pages

This process was discussed earlier in another handout, but I feel that a review is necessary to help you add banners to individual pages. You will need to add banners to pages such as the Homepage, Course Materials and Communications pages (or any other organizational pages), the page for Chat, and any other page that requires a banner. The graphics below show the three different levels of banners I have used: Homepage, Organizer pages, and Chat.

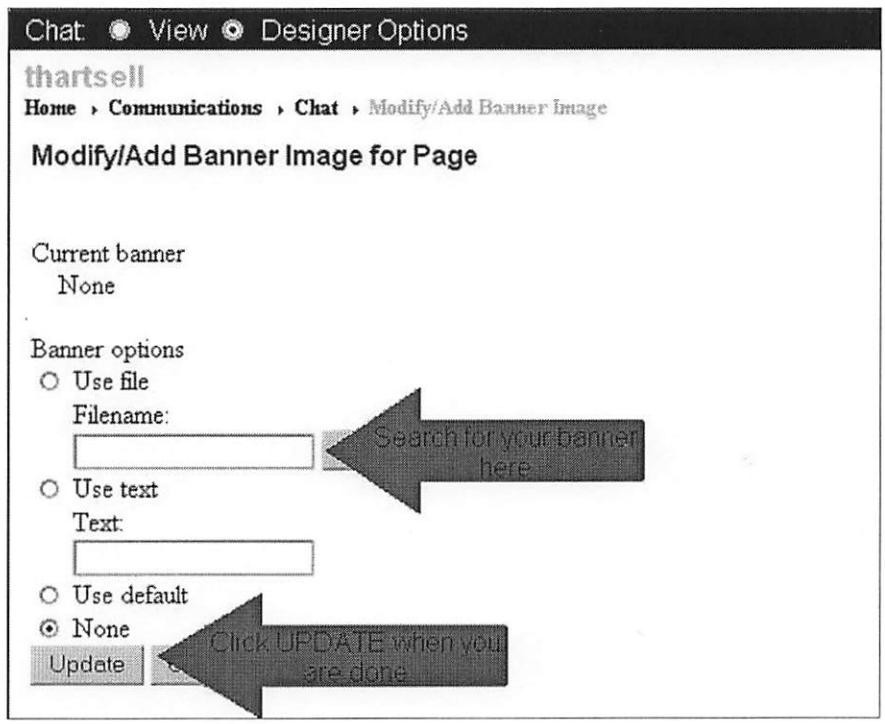




To add a banner, let us say to the Chat page (third level), go directly to that page (Chat Page) and click on *Designer Options* view. Click on the *Modify/Add Banner Image* option and click on GO.

You will arrive to a new window to upload the new banner. Click on BROWSE next to the *Banner Options* area. Locate your banner and click on the PICK button. If the banner was not uploaded previously, you will have to perform that task now.

When you return to the *Modify/Add Banner Image for Page* window, your new file name should be seen. Click on the UPDATE button to accept the changes. Your banner should now be seen in the content frame (e.g., at the top of the Chat page). Just repeat the process for the other pages.



CONTENTS

- Creating the Syllabus, Schedule, and Welcome Page
- Uploading Files
- Making Adjustments

Syllabus, Schedule, & Welcome Pages

For any course, whether online or not, syllabi and course schedules are necessary to let students know what is expected of them. The difference is the Welcome Page. In online courses, it is important to introduce distance learners to the fundamentals of the course and how to navigate through the electronic medium. Information such as appropriate online behaviors (netiquette), how to communicate with one another, how to access online materials, etc. need to be articulated to the students. Sometimes including a biography or photograph of the course instructor can help alleviate some of the anticipation that students may feel coming into an online course. In this tutorial handout, the creation of the syllabus, schedule, and welcome page will be discussed in more detail. In addition, this handout will reiterate the steps for uploading pages to WebCT, and explain what can be done to modify the appearance of the page links.

Creating the Syllabus, Schedule, and Welcome Page

Creating the syllabus, course schedule, and welcome page are the same. You can create these pages in MS Word and then save the pages as HTML files, or better yet, create these pages in Netscape Composer or a similar Web authoring tool.

I really RECOMMEND that you use Netscape Composer or another Web authoring tool. I have tried my hand at using MS Word to create documents and later saving them as HTML. However, nothing works. Alignment of text is always off, I find extra line spacing between sentences, bullets never appear in the area in which they should, and graphics are not always linked to the page correctly. MS Word adds extra HTML coding to pages that when I pull these Word pages up in Netscape Composer, I basically have to start from scratch because everything is messed up. I do not want to promote Netscape Composer here, but I have to advise you to use this software or something similar to create the three pages (as well as your lecture notes).

In Handout One, I gave a link to an online tutorial on how to use Netscape Composer. So, please go there if you want to become more familiar with this program.

For the **syllabus**, some information should be included. Most of this information is standard for all syllabi, but there are some online-specific details to include. In the syllabus, incorporate content such as:

- Course title
- Instructor information
- Description of course or course overview
- Prerequisites if any
- Goals and learning objectives
- Major topic areas
- Assignments
- Grading scale
- Reading materials
- Resources if any
- Communication tools (e.g., e-mail)
- Policies/netiquette
- Computer requirements

The **course schedule** can pretty much take on any format. However, some information that you may want to include in the course schedule is the:

- Distribution of weeks/dates (e.g., Week One – January 14)
- List of topics to be covered in that week/day
- Printed/online materials that need to be read
- Activities that need to be completed (e.g., visit a classroom and write down observation notes)
- Assignments due
- Holidays!
- Examinations
- Chat times if any

The **welcome page** can consist of many different types of information. Take a look at my welcome page in IT 650 for ideas. However, even my page is not all comprehensive. I could integrate much more detail into that page, but I knew that such information would eventually come out during the course. If you have a digital photo of yourself, please include that photo. I, as others in class, would like to see what you look like. There are several students in this class whom I have not met and would like to see a photo. Information that you could include in the welcome page is the:

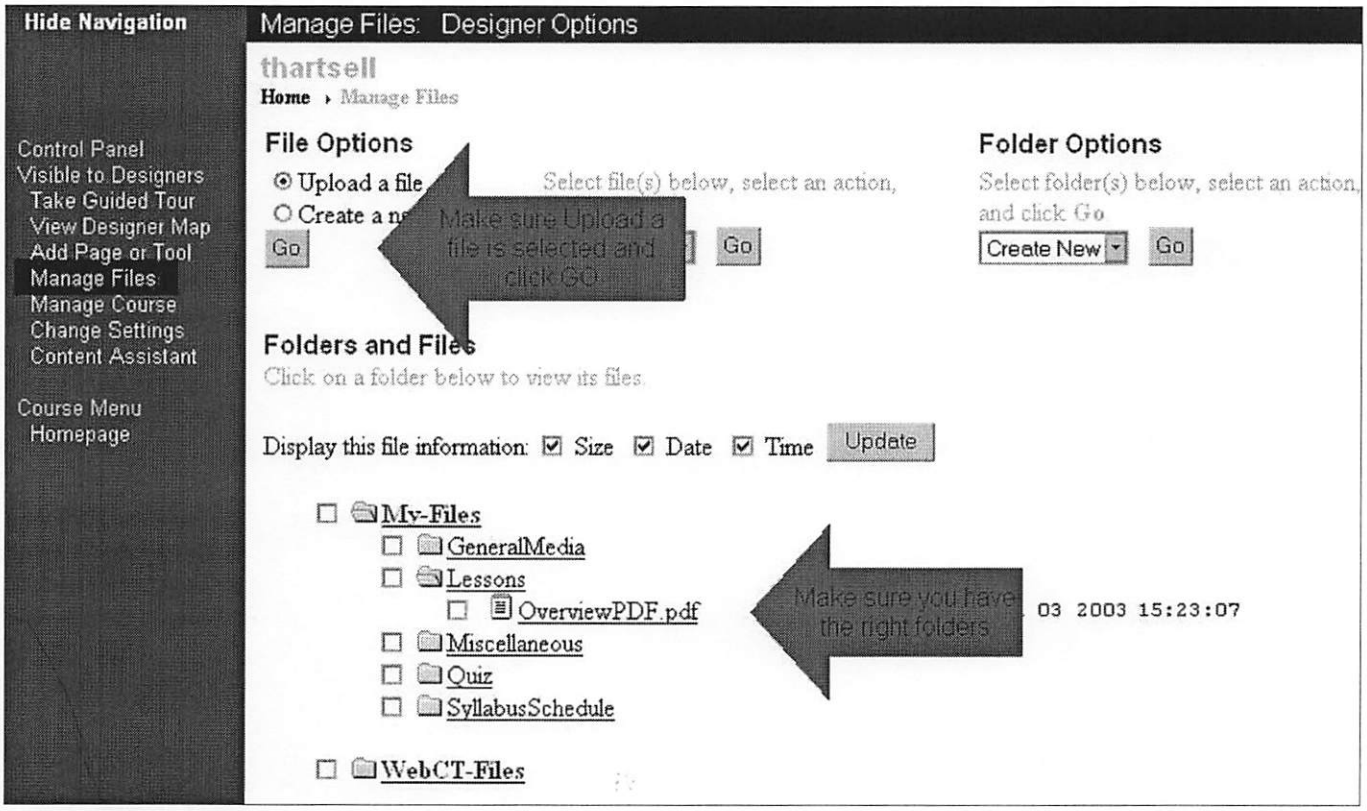
- Biography
- Explanation on how to prepare in taking the course
- Policies governing behavior and discipline
- Course expectations (e.g., need to return periodically to course site)
- Contact people for assistance
- Distance learner characteristics for success (e.g., self-motivated)

Create all these pages in HTML format. Remember, when you include graphics, these files need to be uploaded to the same folder in which the HTML page is located. More of this will be discussed in the next section.

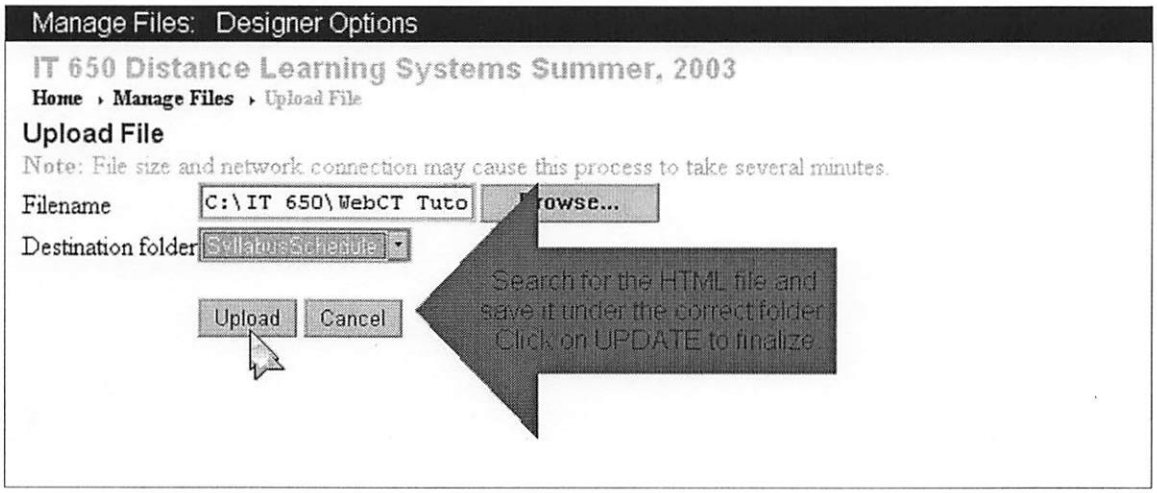
Uploading Files to WebCT

Although this process has been covered previously, it will be repeated to help stimulate recall and practice. Once you have created your three pages, it is time to upload them to the My-Files main folder.

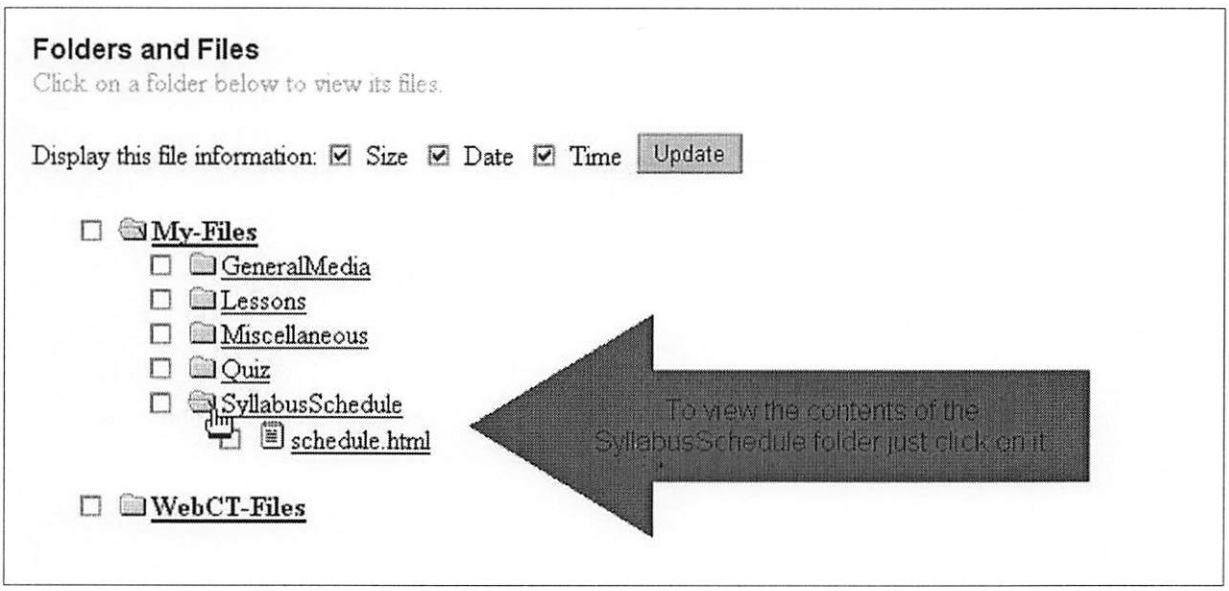
Click on the **Manage Files** option located in the side navigation frame. You will then come to the Folder and Files window. Make sure that you have the appropriate two folders for uploading your Syllabus and Schedule, and the Welcome page (can place in the Miscellaneous). Click on the *Upload a file option* and click on the GO button.



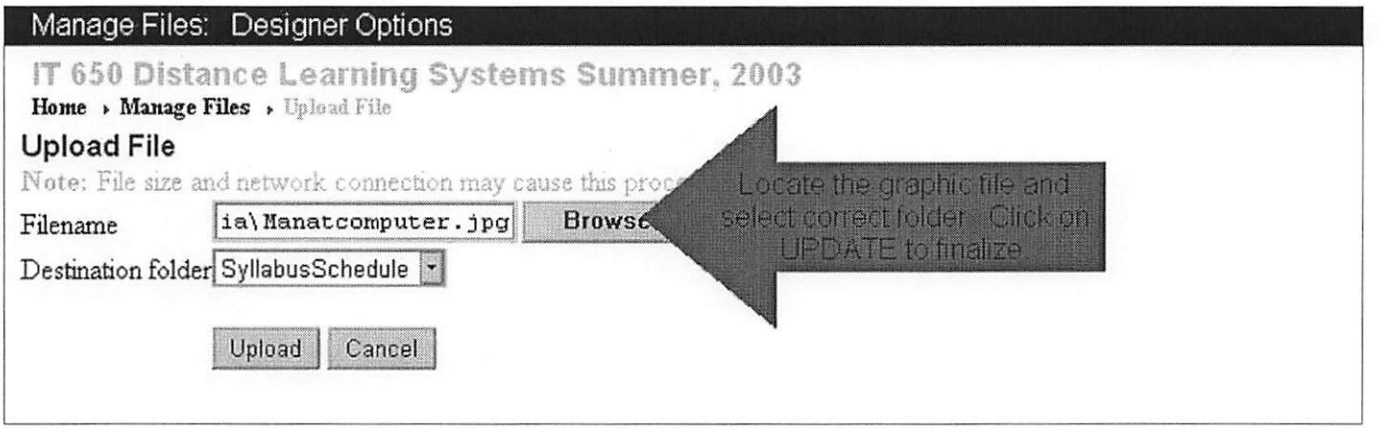
You will then arrive to the *Upload File* window. Locate the HTML file (in this case I am uploading the Syllabus) and make sure that the destination folder is correct (SyllabusSchedule folder). After you perform those two steps, click on UPDATE.



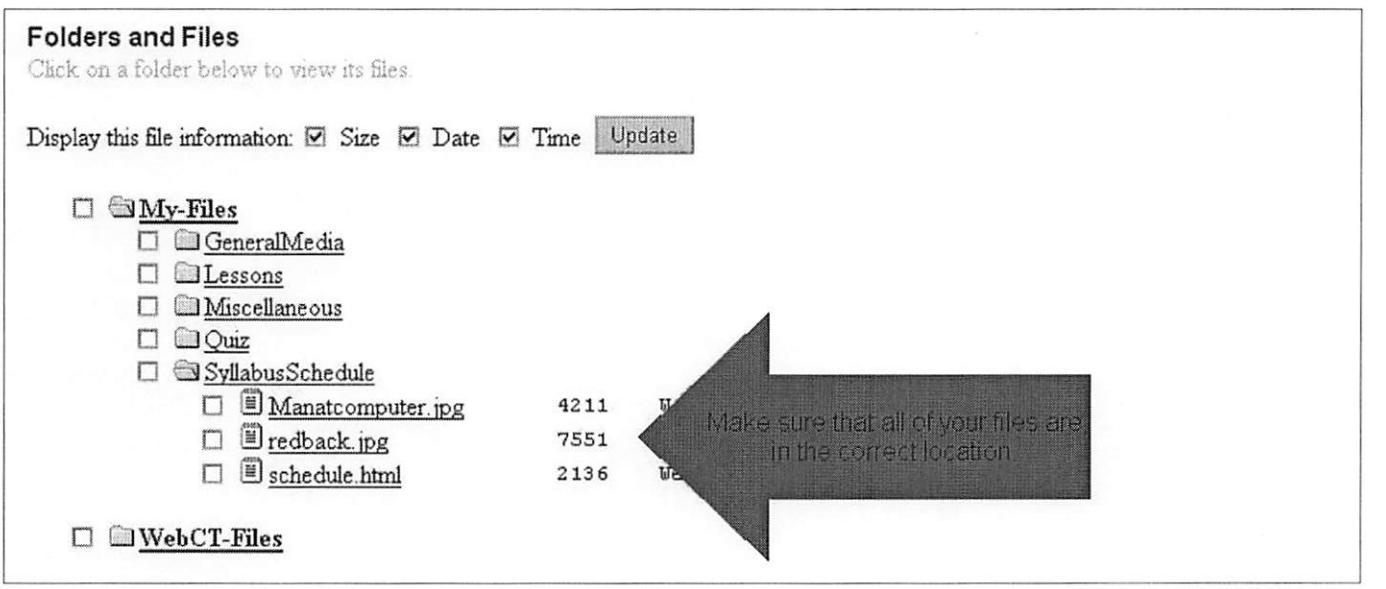
Make sure that the HTML file is in the correct location. Click on the folder (in this case the SyllabusSchedule folder) and see if the file is there.



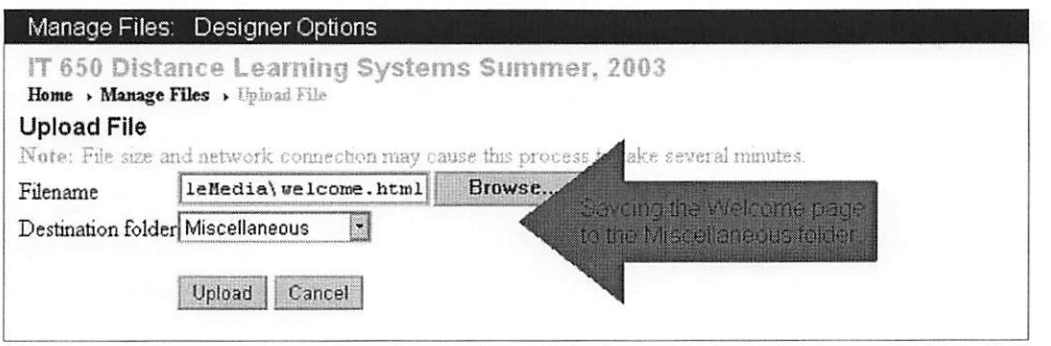
Now, since my syllabus has a background image and a graphic image, I will have to upload these to the SyllabusSchedule folder. To do this, make sure you are under the **Manage Files** area and click on *Upload a file* (under File Options). After that, click on GO. Repeat the process of uploading the graphics and make sure that you are placing them under the correct folders.



When you return to the Manage Files area, make sure that all your graphic files are in the same folder as the syllabus.



For the Course Schedule, repeat the same process as explained above. The Welcome Page also follows the same procedures, except that you will be saving the HTML and graphics under the miscellaneous folder or a folder that you created specifically for the Welcome Page.

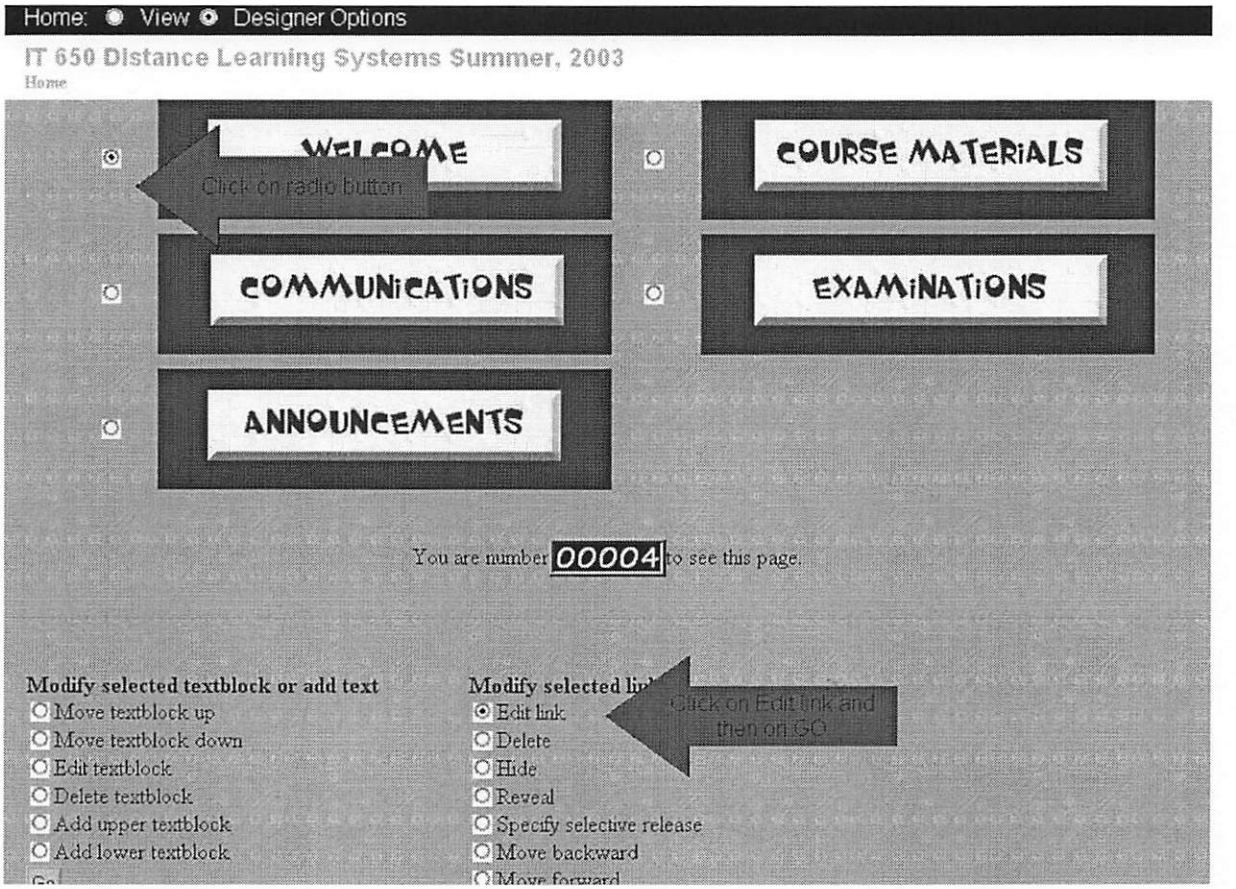


Making Adjustments to the Layout

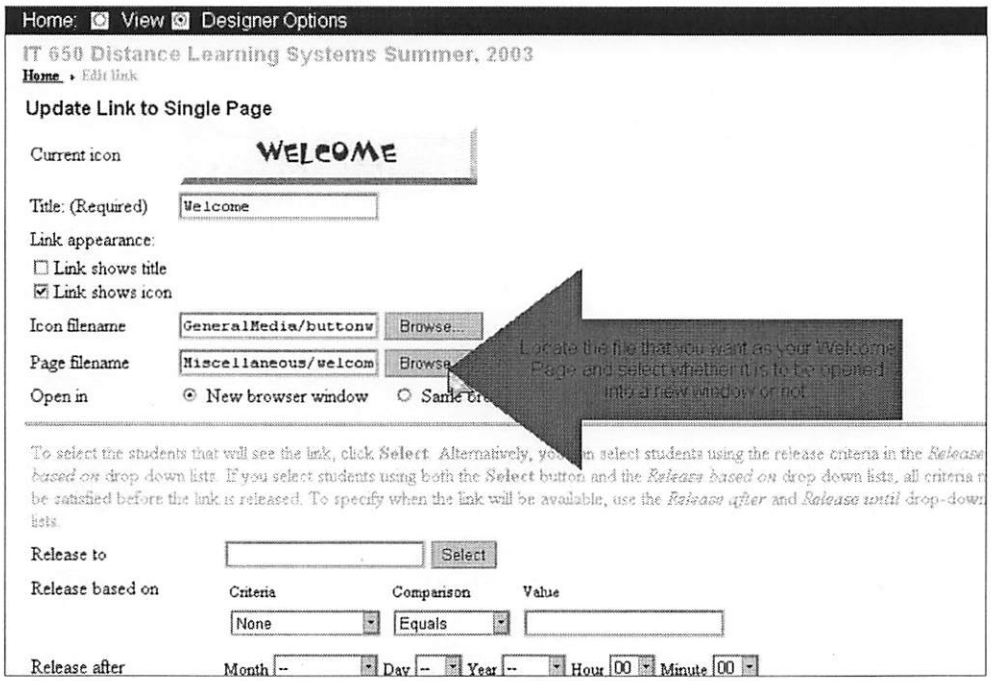
If you have created the pages for the Syllabus, Schedule, and Welcome pages, then all you have to do now is select the appropriate HTML file. If you have not already set up these pages (under the Homepage and Course Materials), then you will have to perform that task now. Please refer to the Customizing the Layout handout on how to add or delete pages.

Let us say that you have set up these areas using a blank page as a default. Now, it is time to substitute those blank pages for the new HTML files. Let us change the Welcome page first. Go to the Homepage and click on *Designer Options* view.

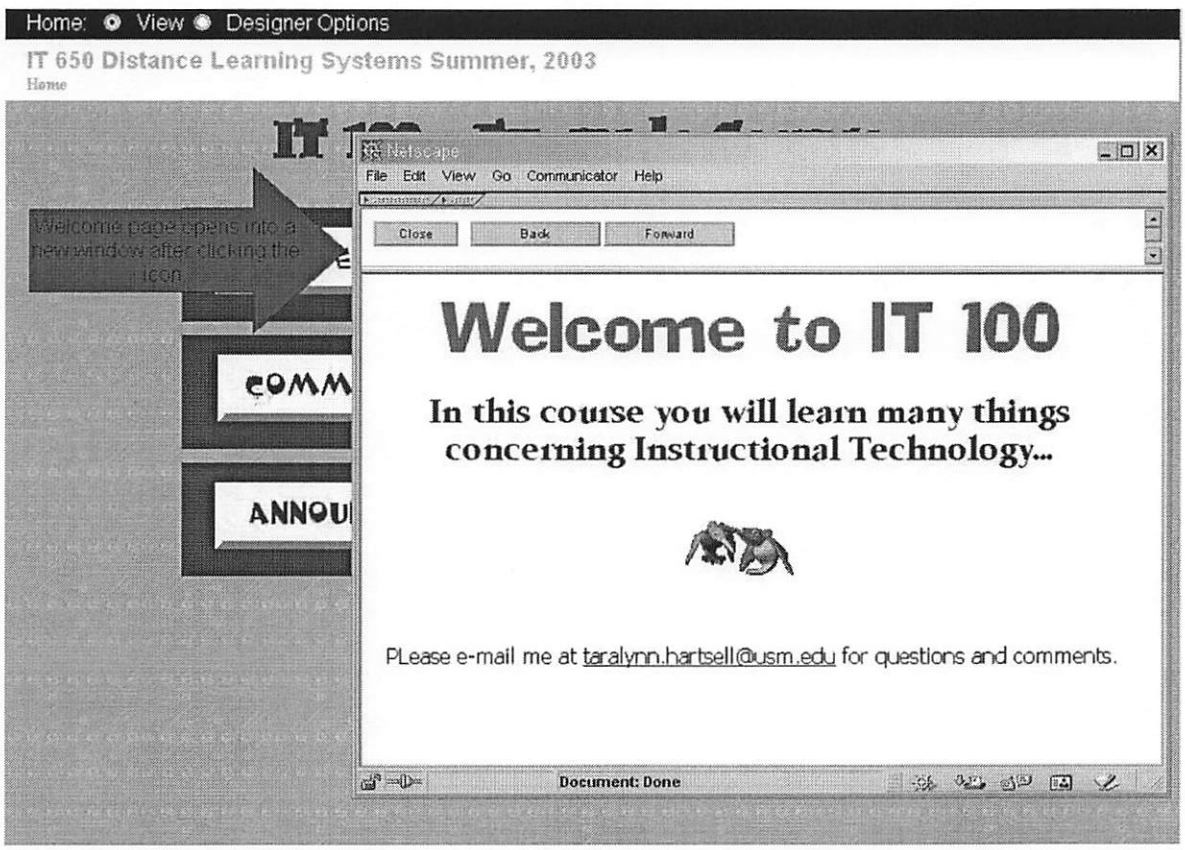
Click on the radio button next to the Welcome page icon. Scroll down to the *Modify selected link* area and choose *Edit link*. Click on the GO button to proceed.



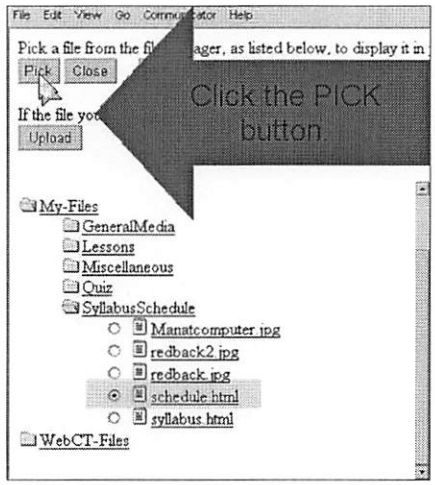
Locate your HTML file by clicking on the BROWSE button. Also, choose whether you would like the page to open into a new window or not. When you have made these decisions, click on the UPDATE button. Now, go back to the Homepage and click on the Welcome page link.



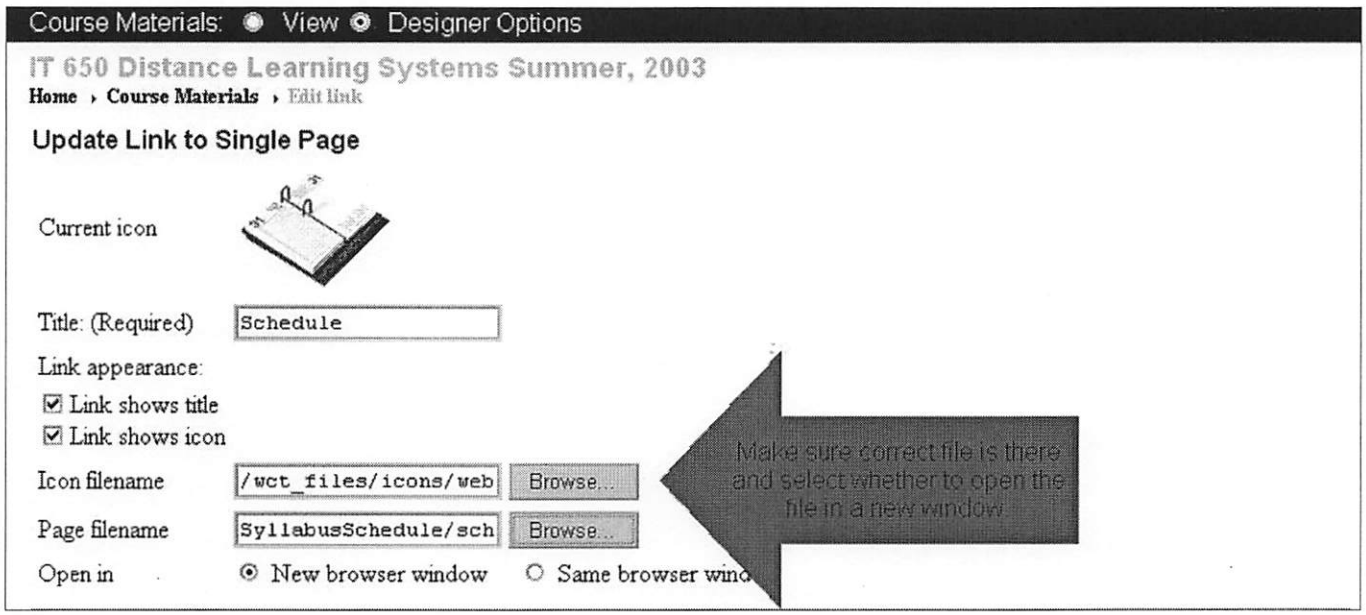
Your HTML file and graphics should appear. If the graphics are not there, three reasons may be causing them not to show: 1) you did not upload the graphics to the correct folder, 2) the graphics were saved with a filename that had spaces, or 3) the graphic format may be of the wrong kind (e.g., Photoshop PSD format). Try correcting these errors if this is the case and see whether the graphics will now show.



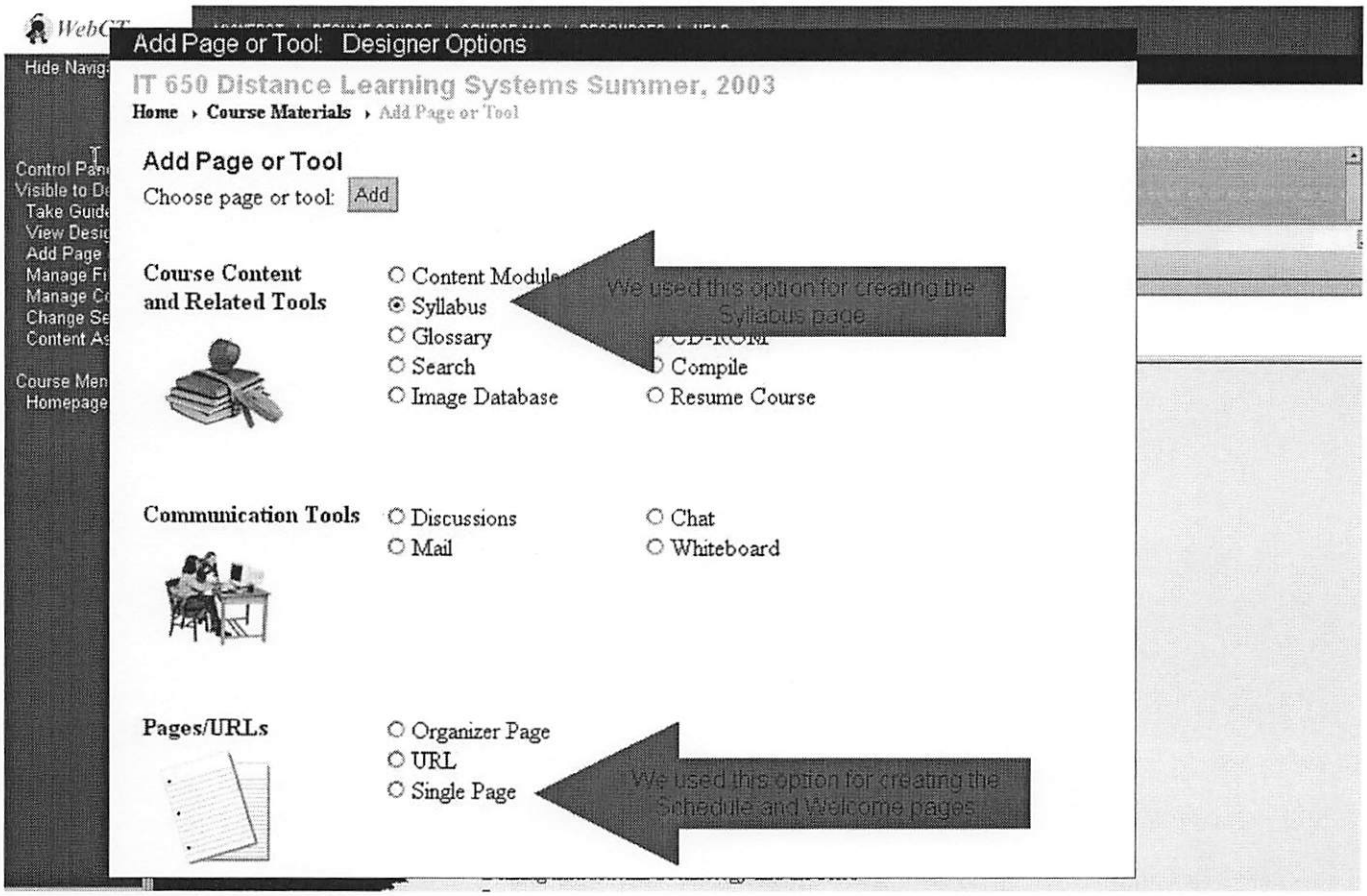
The process is also similar for the Course Schedule. You just need to go to the *Course Materials* section to upload the HTML files. Once there, click on the radio button next to the Course Schedule area and repeat the steps mentioned above. When under the Pick Upload window, click on the Schedule.html and then on the PICK button to upload.



Make sure that the new file is in the Page filename area and select whether you want the Schedule to open into a new window. Once you make the changes, click UPDATE to finalize.



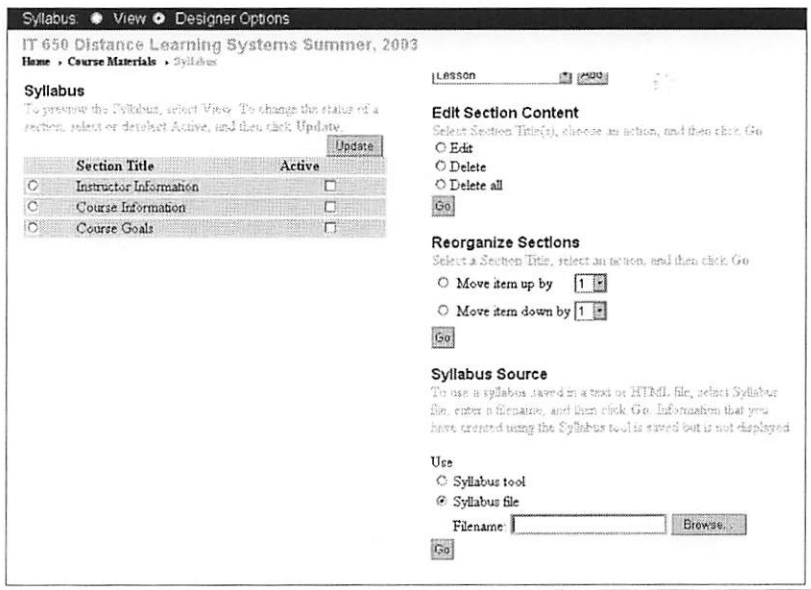
Now, when you click on the Schedule link under *Course Materials*, the new file should appear.



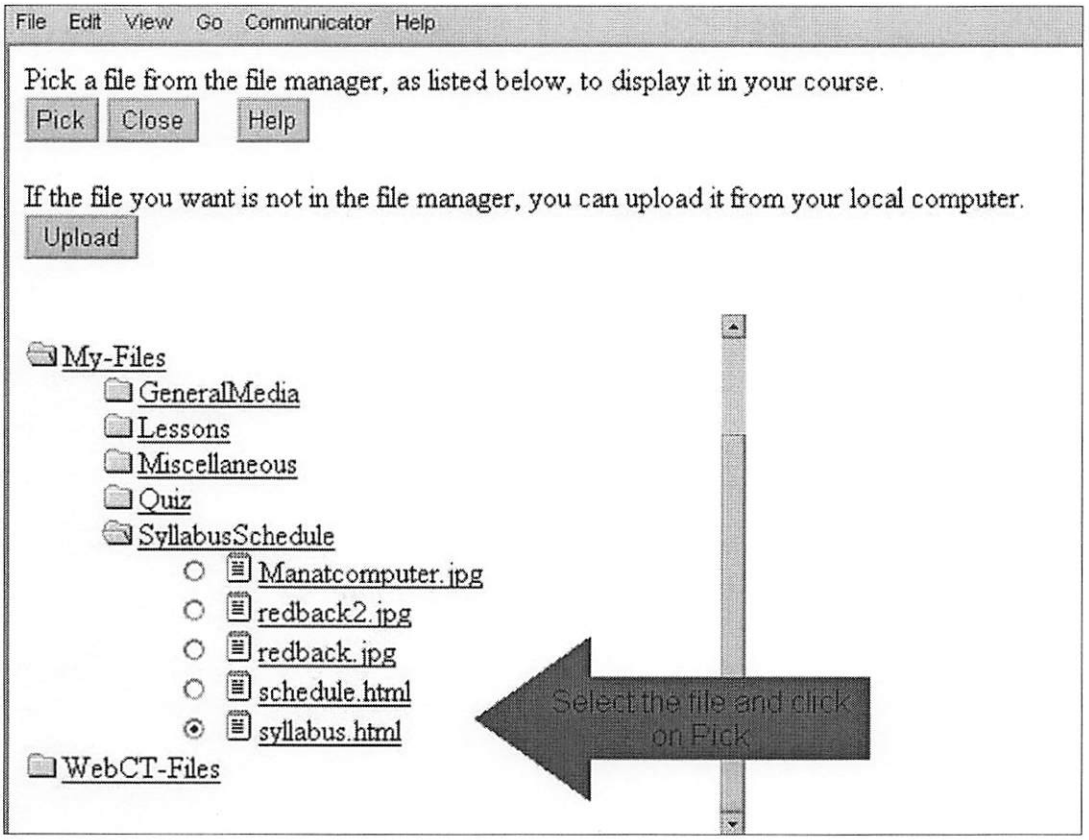
The process is a little different for the Syllabus. If you have already set up the Syllabus page as discussed earlier in another handout, you would have used the *Syllabus* option under the **Add Page or Tool** area. For the Welcome Page and the Course Schedule remember that we used the *Single Page* option. So, the Syllabus takes an extra step when selecting a file.

Therefore, for the Syllabus, make sure you are on the Course Materials page. Click directly on the Syllabus link and it will take you to another window. Nothing will be there because we have not selected a file. Click on the *Designer Options* view toward the top. You should arrive to the Syllabus options page like the graphic to the right.

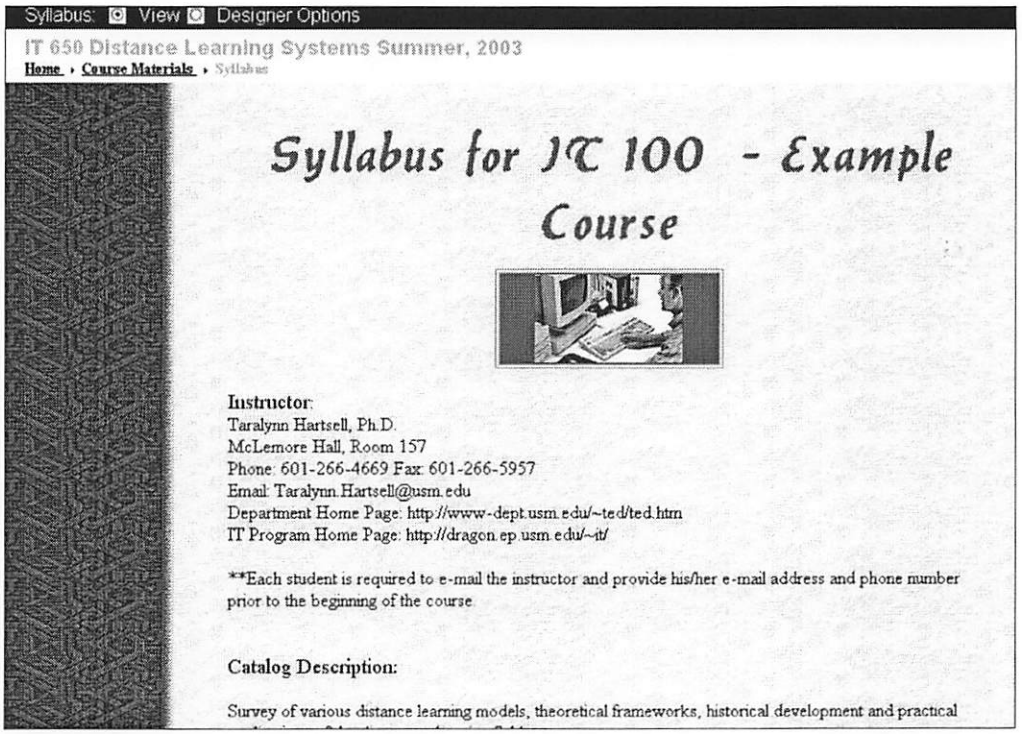
Go to the area entitled, *Syllabus Source*, and click on Syllabus File. You will then need to BROWSE for the file under your SyllabusSchedule folder (or another folder you used).



Find the Syllabus file and click on the PICK button. You will return to the previous screen. There, click on the GO button beneath that section.



To preview your syllabus, go back to the *Course Materials* page and click on the Syllabus link. You may notice that this time we did not have the option to open the file into a new window. So, the syllabus remained within the frame. If the graphics are missing, please check again for those three reasons mentioned earlier when discussing about the Welcome Page.



Creating an Online Course with WebCT

CONTENTS

- Different File Formats
- Uploading Lessons and Materials
- Changing Order of Lessons
- Deleting Lessons
- Creating Assignments and the Drop Box

Lessons and Assignments

A course cannot be a course without lessons or instructional materials. In addition, to assess whether students have learned the information, assignments must be given. Lessons in WebCT can take on many different forms. It could be a simple HTML file with photographs and text, a plain text document, a PowerPoint slideshow, or a direct hyperlink to a Web site. In this tutorial handout, creating and uploading lessons and assignments will be discussed in further depth. Lessons and assignments are the heart of online courses apart from the communication tools. Therefore, providing students with enough instructional materials and related activities is necessary to ensure comprehension of the subject matter being taught.

Different File Formats

Lecture materials or activities can employ a variety of file formats depending upon the nature of the lesson. For instance, lecture notes can be created using MS Word or Netscape Composer (recommend this approach) that can be saved as HTML files. These files can have hyperlinks to different Web sites that when clicked upon, students can view these Web sites.

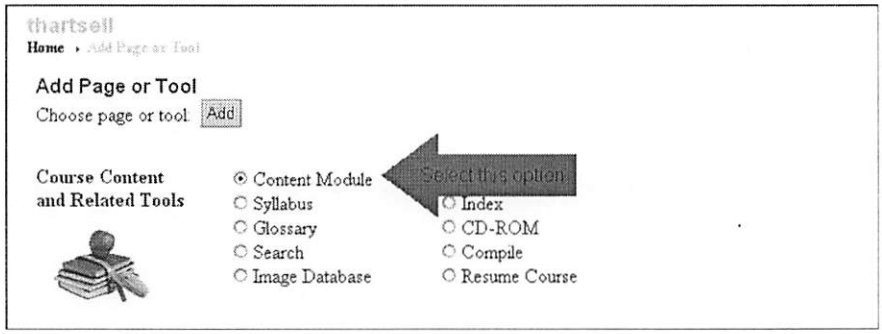
PowerPoint slideshows could also be used to present material to online students. These slideshows could include instructor notes that follow the key points being presented on the various slides. Note that you do not have to save the PowerPoint slideshows as HTML (from what I have discovered). Just save the PowerPoint as you normally would and then upload the entire file to the Manage Files area.

PDF files could also be used in lieu of HTML files. As long as the student has Adobe Acrobat Reader on his/her computer, PDF files can be retrieved automatically.

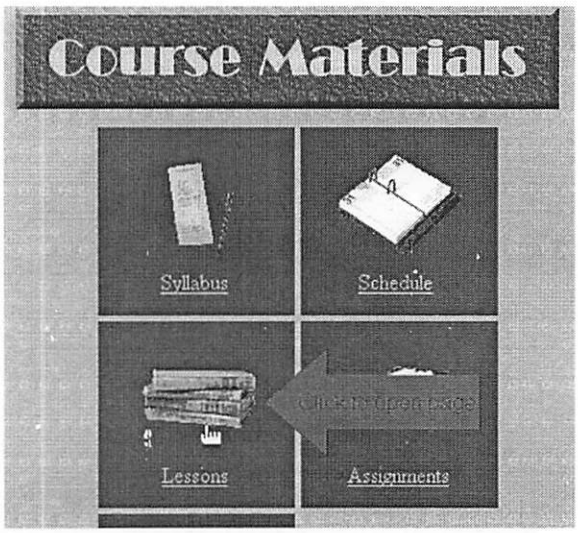
Finally, multimedia can be incorporated into the course like digital photos, sound, animation, movies, etc. Students just need to make sure they have the correct player/software to open these files. Therefore, an instructor should let students know what they need to download and install onto their computers in order to view the multimedia files. This could be covered in the Welcome Page.

Uploading Lessons and Materials to WebCT

After you have created the instructional materials, uploading them to WebCT is the next step. Hopefully, you have created an area under Course Materials designated specifically for Lessons. If you have not, please refer to the Customizing the Layout handout and look for the section entitled *Adding and Deleting Pages*. When you add the Lessons page, be sure to select the Content Module option under the **Add Page or Tool** window (see graphic to below).

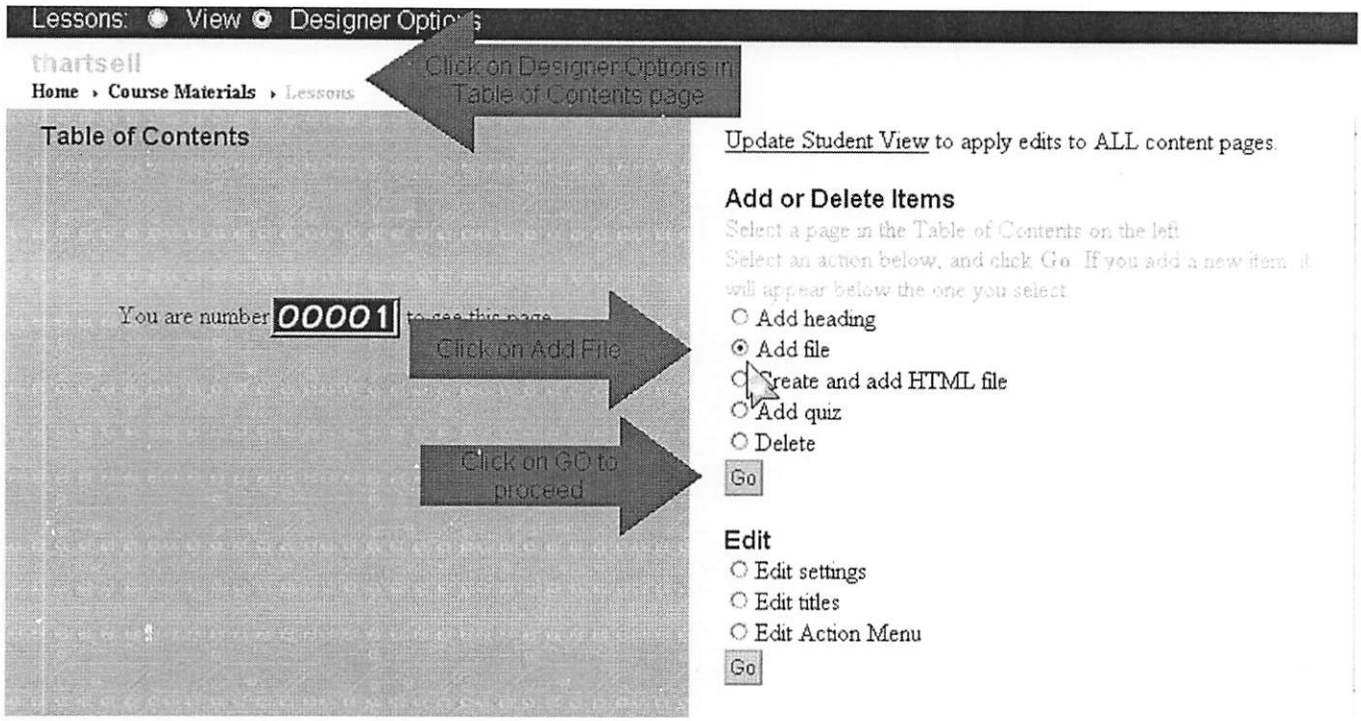


To add lessons to the *Lessons* section under Course Materials (or wherever you placed the Lessons section), please follow the steps provided in this section.

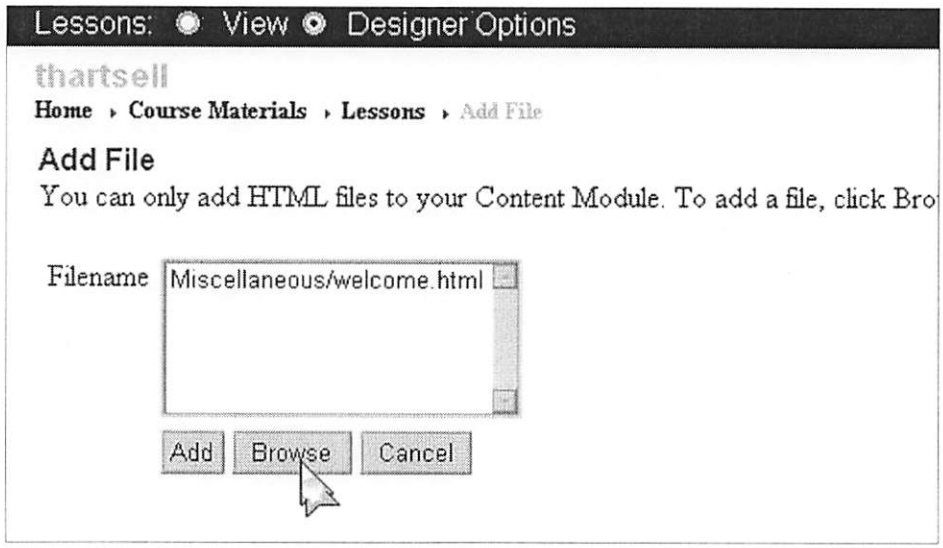


First, find the area in which the *Lessons* are housed. Most likely, it should be located under Course Materials. Click on the *Lessons* icon to go to the Lessons page.

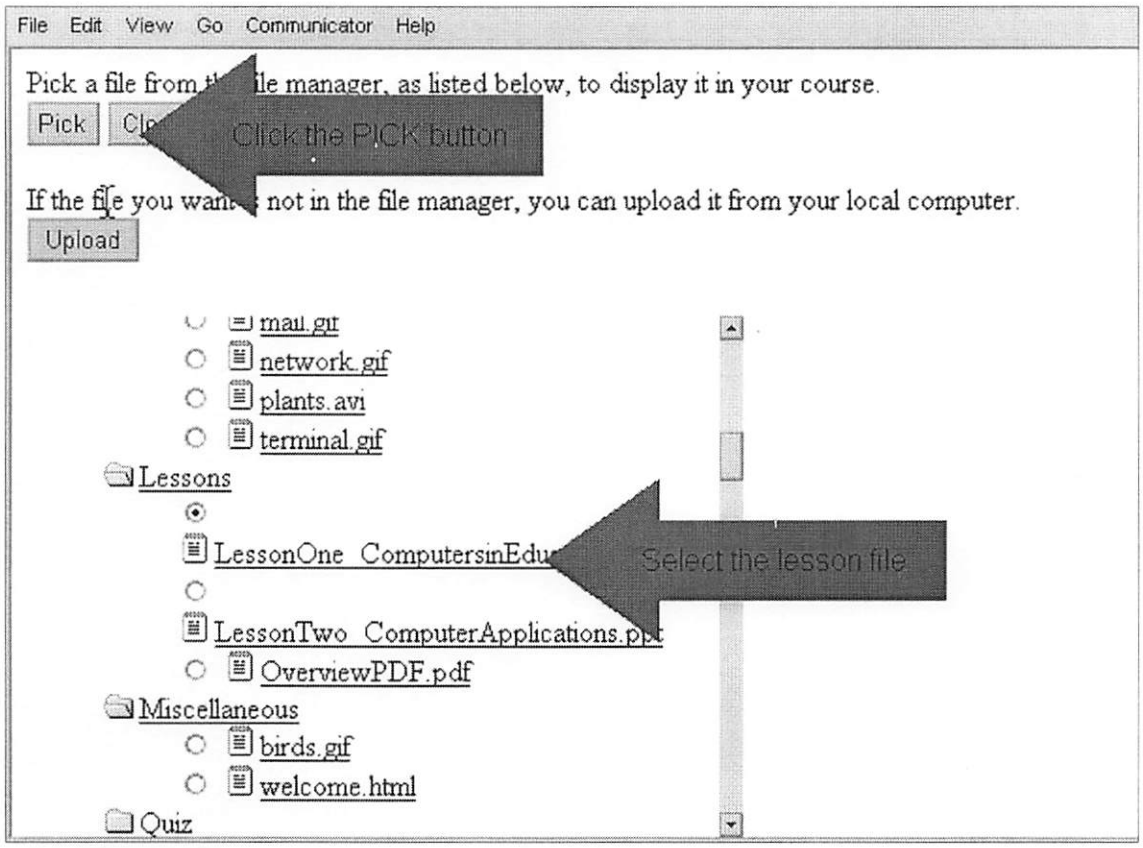
Once under the Lessons page, click on the *Designer Options* view. You should see the Table of Contents with several options to the right-hand side. Locate and select the *Add File* option under the Add or Delete Items area and click on the GO button (see graphic on following page).



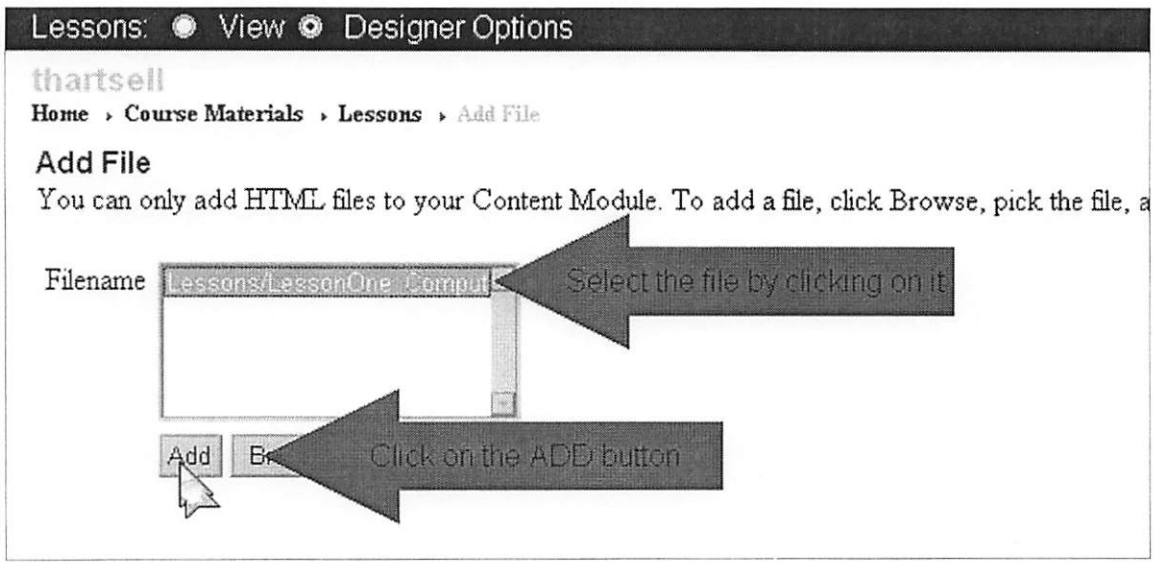
You will be taken to an Add File window. Click on BROWSE to search for the lesson file you want. NOTE: If you have not already uploaded all of your lesson files to the Notes folder, you should perform this step before proceeding on. Please refer to the Overview handout and look for the Uploading Files section.



Now, select the file under the Lessons folder by clicking on the radio button and then on the PICK button to finalize.

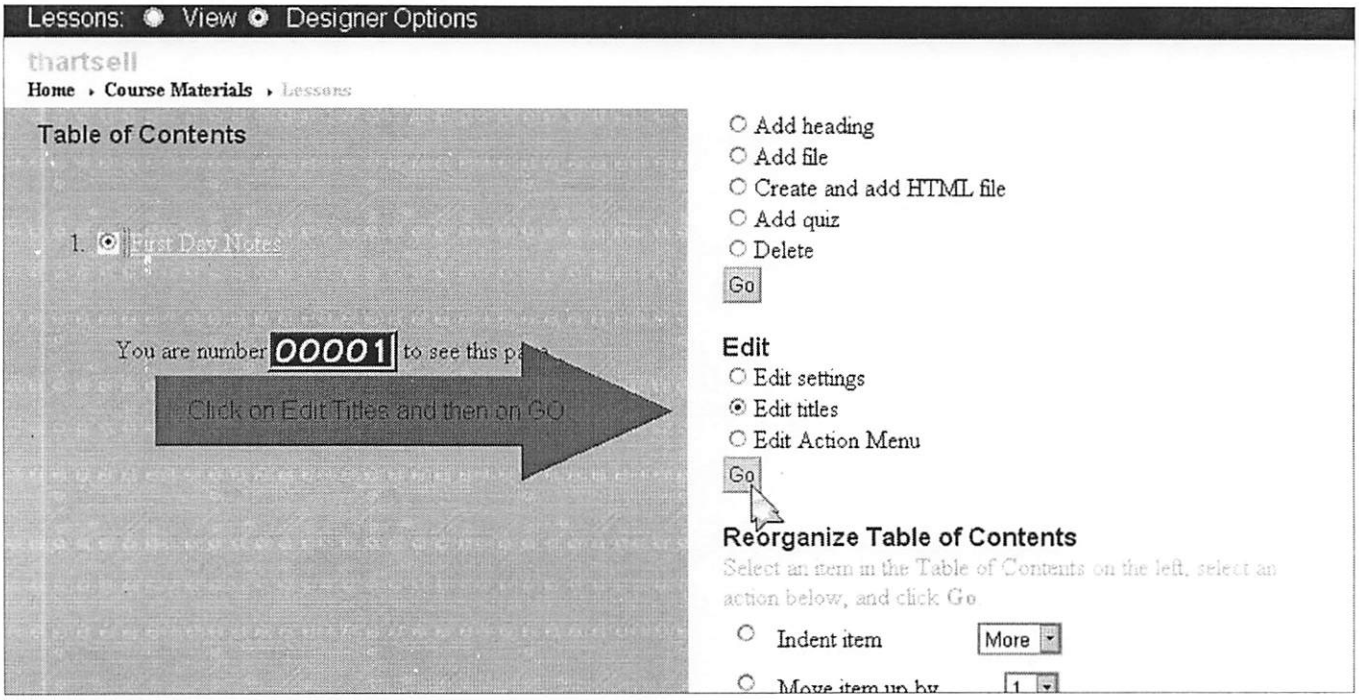


Highlight the file by clicking on it and click on the ADD button toward the bottom.

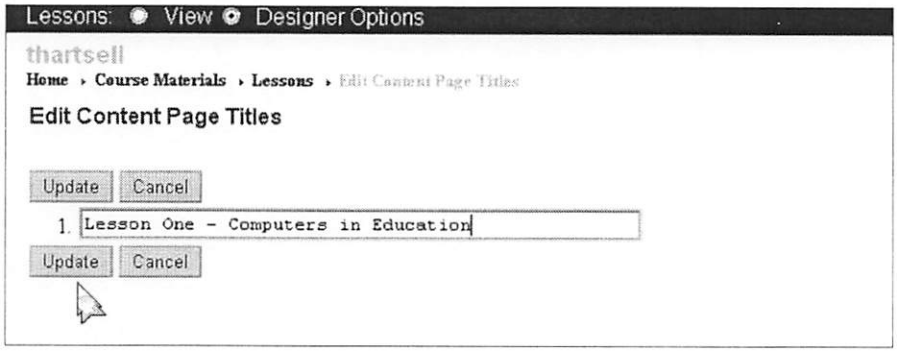


You will then return to the Table of Contents page and your file should appear to the left.

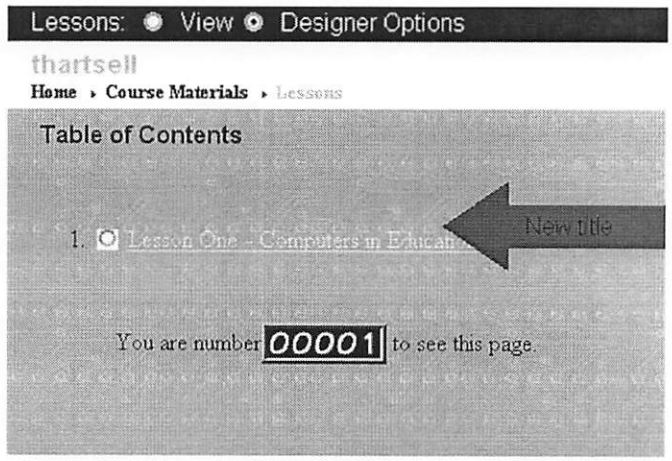
The next thing you may need to do is change the title of the lesson's link. To do this, select the file by clicking on the radio button and then on the *Edit Titles* option under the Edit area. After that, click on GO to finalize.



In the *Edit Content Page Titles* window, type in the new file name for the link and click on the UPDATE button to finalize.

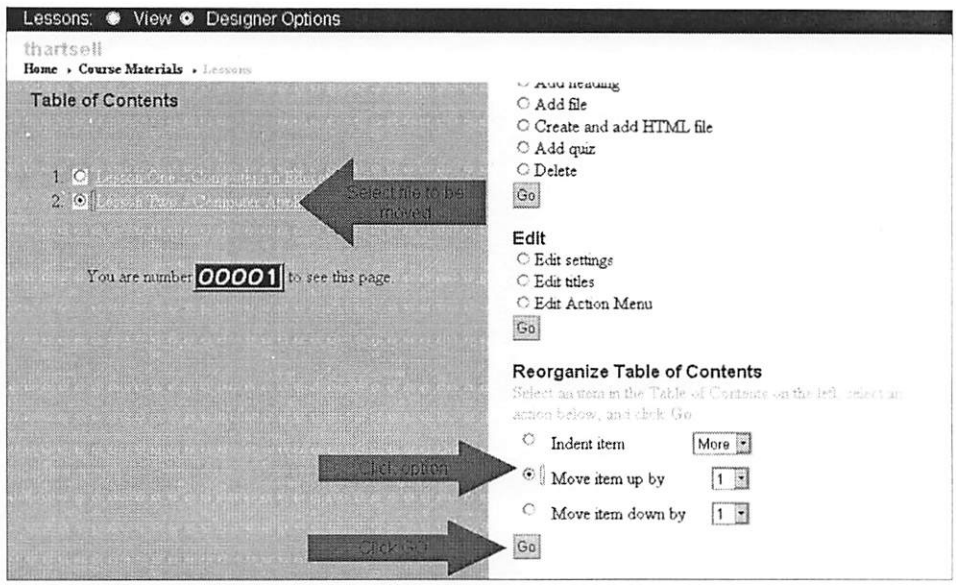


The lesson link should now have the new title. Complete these steps until you have all the lesson materials under the Table of Contents.



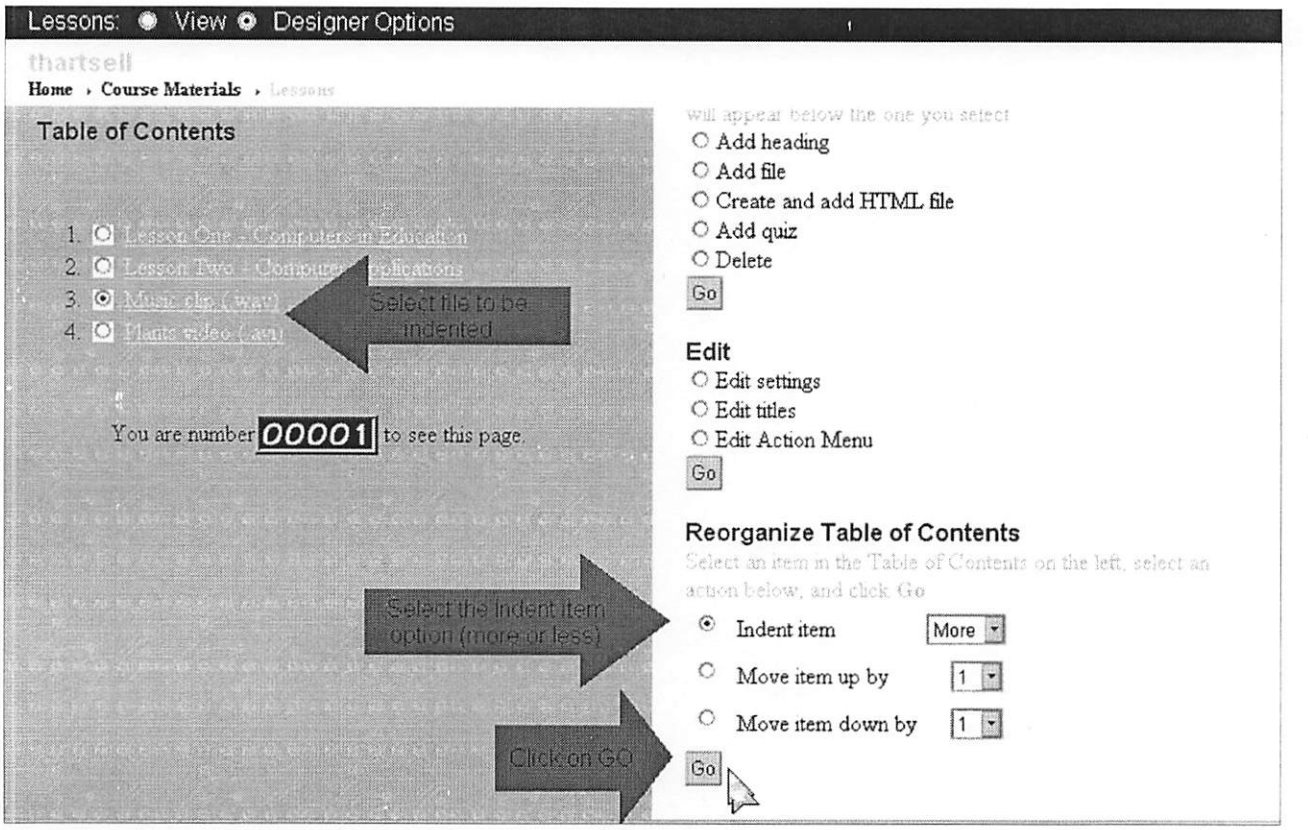
Changing the Order of Lessons

You can also reorder any of the lessons under the Table of Contents by using the *Reorganize the Table of Contents* options. To move files up or down, click on the file to moved first and then select the *Move item up by* or *Move item down by* options. Click on the GO button to finalize and you should see a change in order.

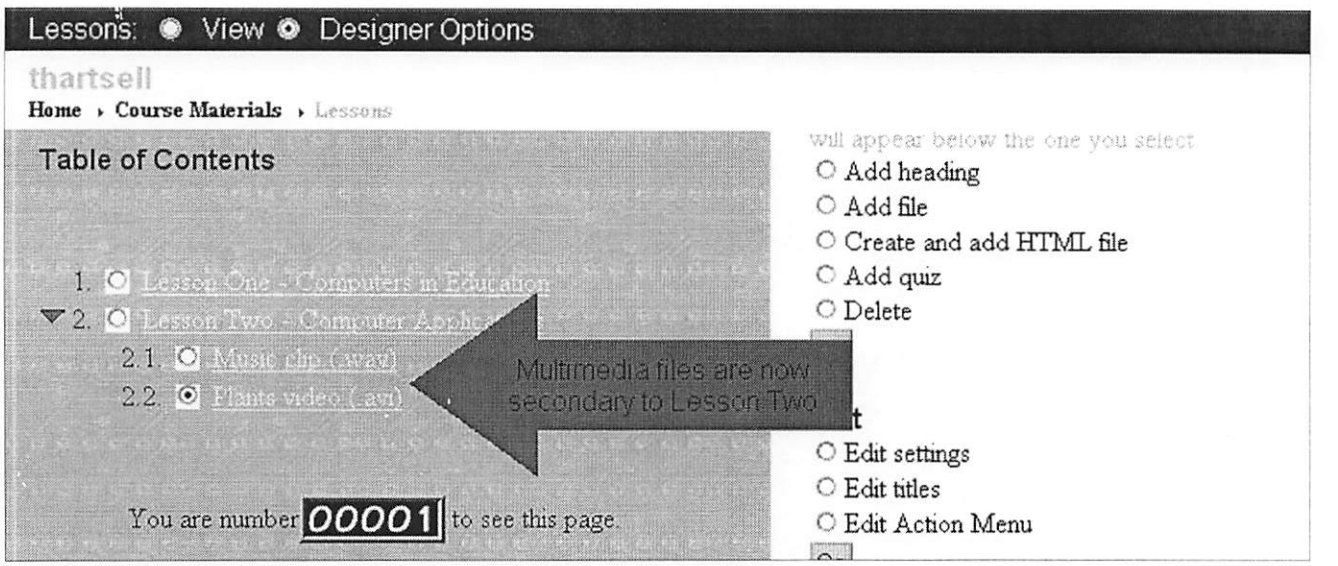


Items can also be indented so

that one file will fall underneath another. For instance, I want the two multimedia files become subsidiary to Lesson Two. First, select the file to be indented. Then, select the *Indent item* option and choose either more or less. Click on GO and see the results.

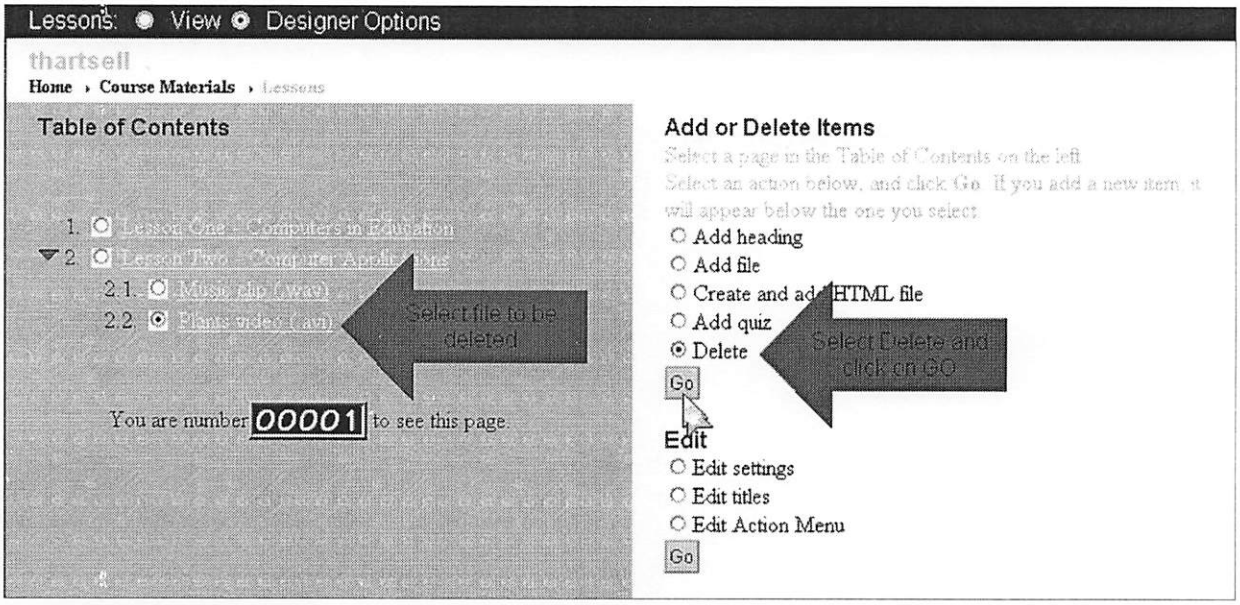


The multimedia files are now subsidiary to Lesson Two. If you want the second level items to be come first again, just repeat the steps but select **Less** on the *Indent item* option.

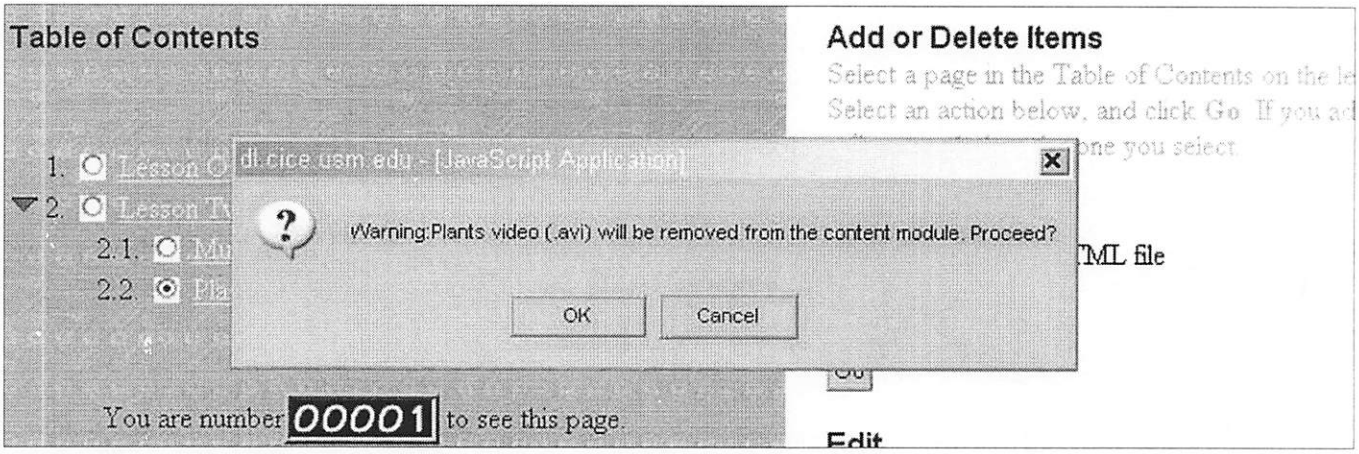


Deleting Lessons from WebCT

Deleting Lesson links are as easy as indenting them. To delete a link, select the link and the *Delete* option under the *Add or Delete Items* area. Clicking on the GO button will finalize the deletion.

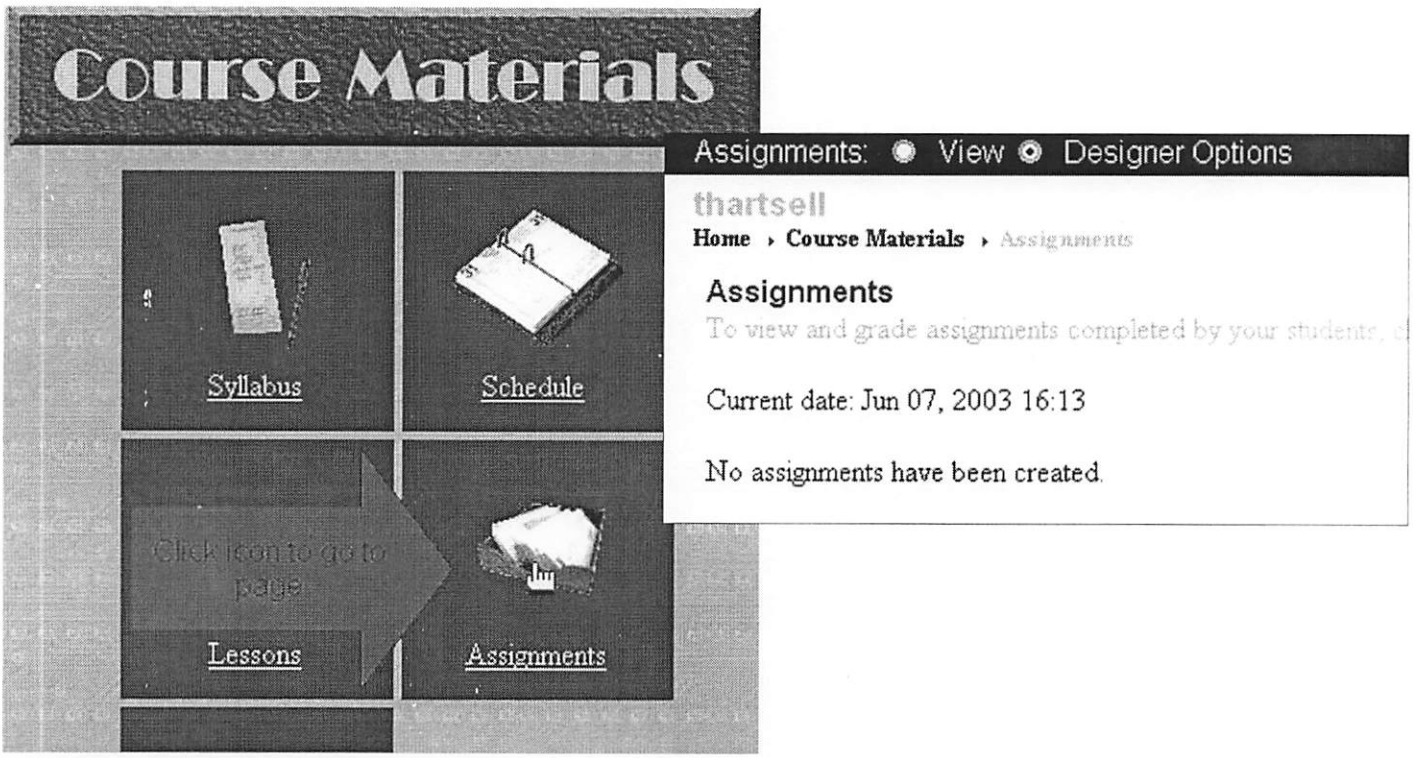


A delete confirmation window will appear. If you are certain, click the OK button. The file should now be deleted from the Table of Contents.

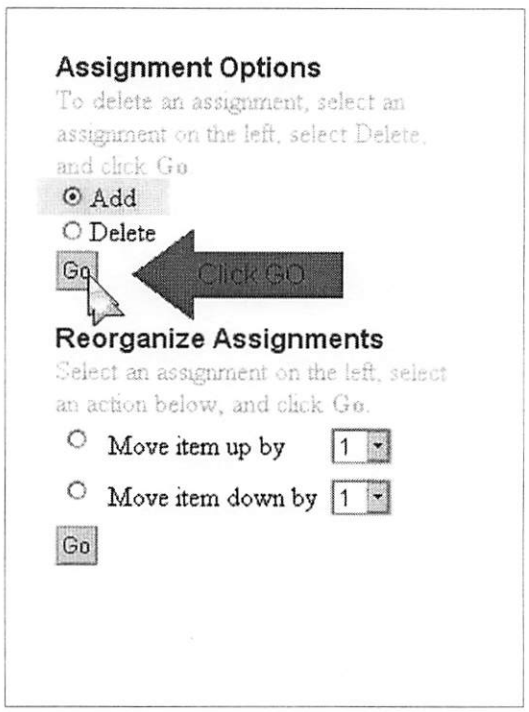


Creating Assignments and the Drop Box

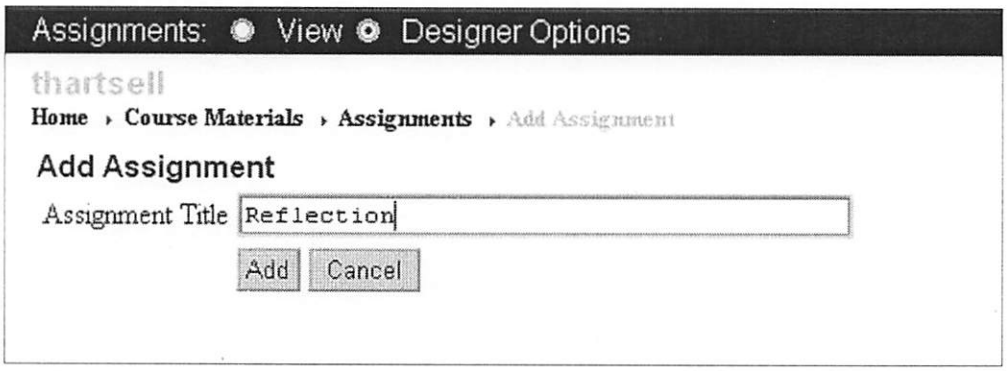
Creating assignments for WebCT is quite simple. But first, you must go to the Assignments page. Locate the Assignments icon (most likely under *Course Materials*) and click on that icon. You will then arrive to the Assignments page with no assignments listed.



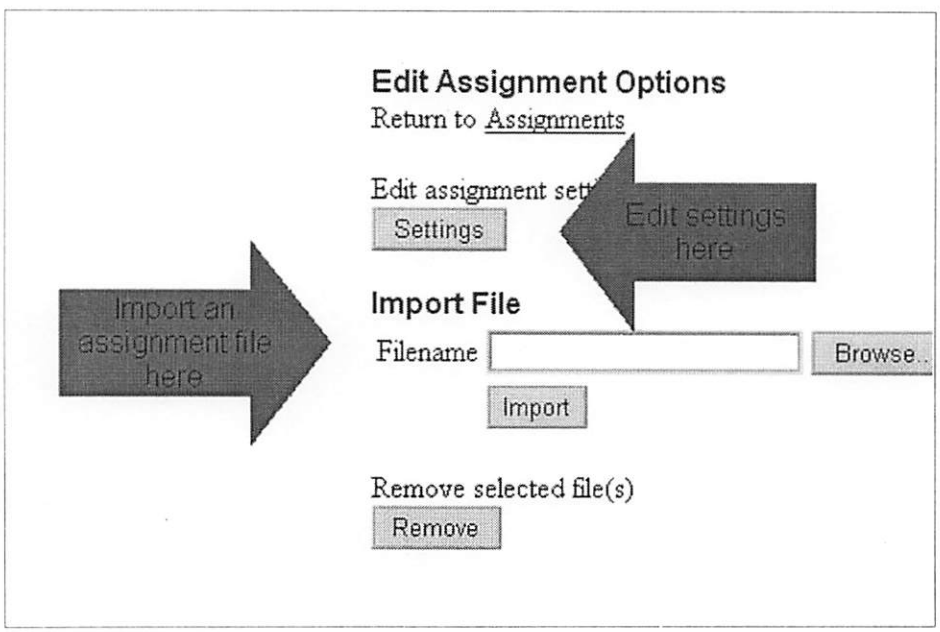
To add an assignment, select the option *Add* located under the Assignment options area. Click on the GO button to take you to the next screen.



Type in a name for the assignment and click on ADD.

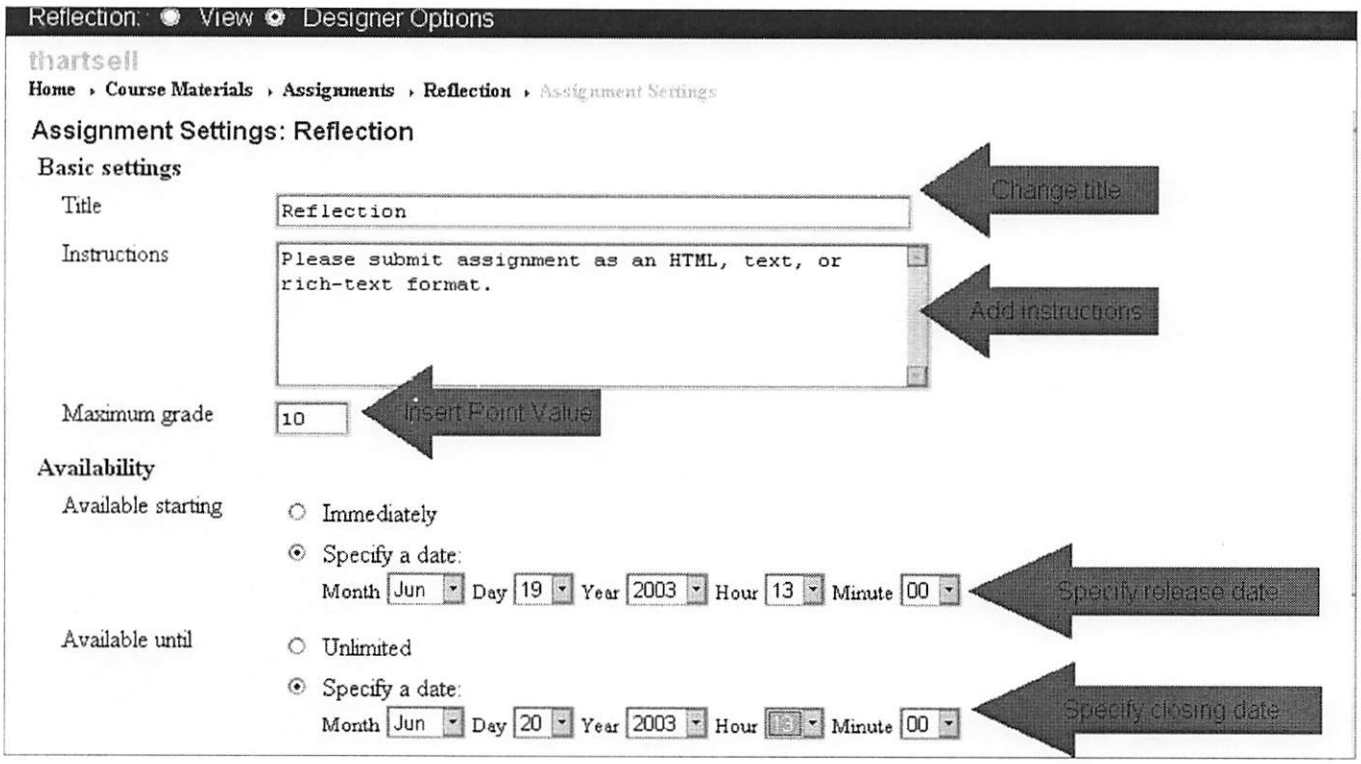


Now, you are ready to do some editing for the assignment. Click on the name of the assignment link that you just added.

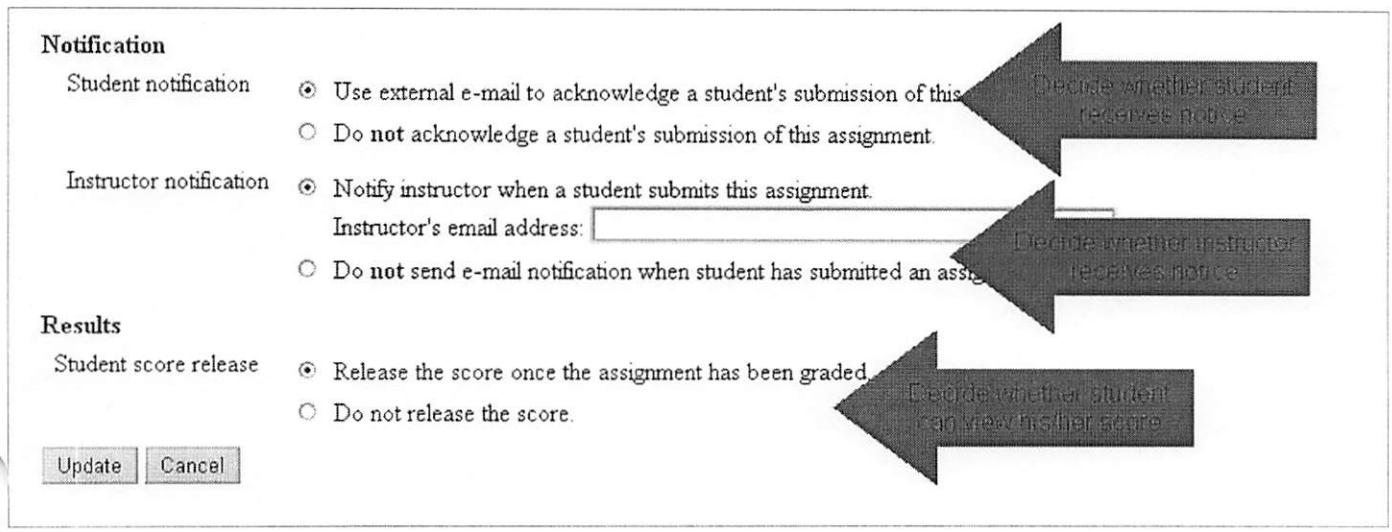


You will be taken to another window with more options. Here, you can import a file that explains the assignment more thoroughly (e.g., WebQuest). If you are planning to give students instructions later, then you just need to edit the assignment *Settings*. This is the option that I take because my instructions for completing assignments are usually given someplace else.

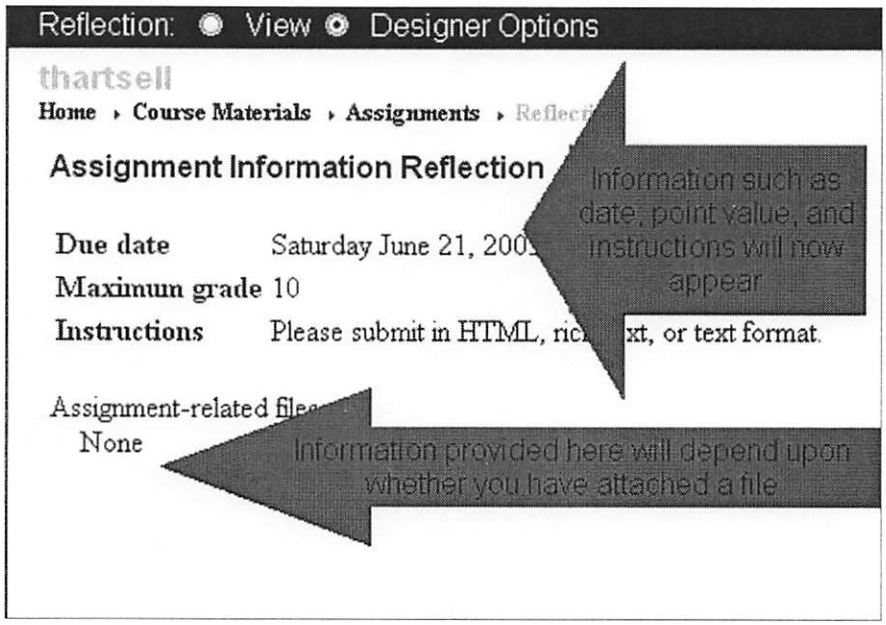
Under the Assignment Settings window, several options are made available: (a) the title of the assignment can be altered, (b) some general instructions can be added, (c) the point value for the assignment can be inserted, and (d) the release and closing dates for submitting assignments can be determined.



In addition, the instructor can decide upon whether (a) students can receive notification of submitted assignments, (b) the instructor receives notification that an assignment has been submitted, and (c) students can view their scores after grading. Once all of these options have been selected, click on the UPDATE button to finalize.

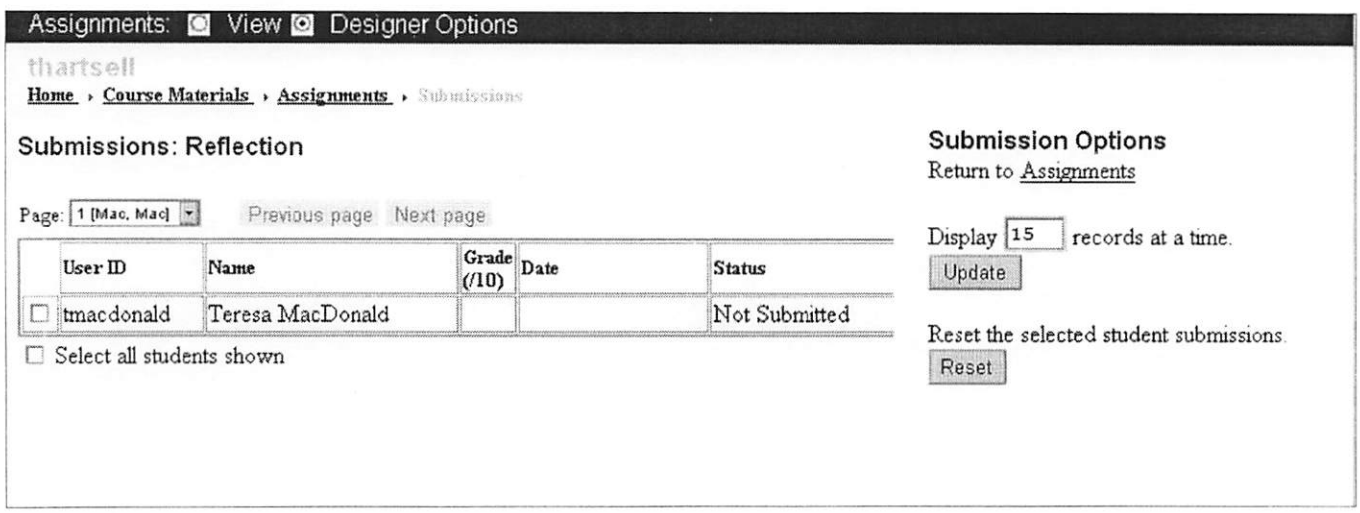


Once you have UPDATED the assignment settings, some information concerning the assignment should now be seen.



Now, return to the Assignments page. To do this, click on the *Assignments* link in the breadcrumb trail area. You should see the two dates for release and closure. Next to that is a Submissions link. Click on that link to see the submissions page for that particular assignment.

Right now, you should not have any students. We will cover this aspect under the Course Management Tools handout. I have added a student in my WebCT course to show what would be seen once the Submissions link has been clicked. After Teresa submits an assignment through the Drop Box, I would see the date she submitted the assignment as well as a Not Graded link under the Status column (signifying that I have not graded the assignment). Once the Not Graded link has been clicked, I would be taken to another window. After grading her assignment there, a score would later be seen under the Grade column.



Because you cannot view the student submission window yet, I am attaching a copy of the first assignment for this class so you can see what it would look like (with the names removed of course).

	User ID	Name	Grade (/5)	Date	Status
☐			5	May 30, 2003 21:01	Graded
☐					Not Submitted
☐			5	May 28, 2003 21:49	Graded
☐				Jun 01, 2003 07:56	Not Graded
☐					Not Submitted
☐			5	May 31, 2003 08:24	Graded
☐					Not Submitted
☐			5	Jun 01, 2003 21:06	Graded
☐					Not Submitted
☐			5	May 28, 2003 10:27	Graded
☐			5	Jun 01, 2003 18:55	Graded
☐					Not Submitted
☐			2.5	May 31, 2003 10:38	Graded

If you are curious to see what the *Grade Assignment* window looks like, please see the graphic on the following page. This window has several items for the instructor. First, the student's name and submission date of the assignment are at the top. Files that the student submits can be viewed in the *Student Files* area. The instructor can also type in a Grade and add any comments that she/he has concerning the assignment. Comments are mandatory because WebCT will not allow the instructor to submit grades without a comment. Finally, once the instructor is through with grading, she/he clicks on the GRADE button and the score is submitted and seen as in the graphic above.

Assignment Drop Box: View Designer Options

IT 650 Distance Learning Systems Summer 2003

Home › Course Materials › Assignment Drop Box › Submissions › Grade Assignment

Grade Assignment: WebCT Course Proposal

WebCT Course Proposal		
Name:	Maximum grade: 5	Date Submitted: May 30, 2003 21:01

Student files

Files	Modification Date	Size
webctproposal.htm	May 30, 2003 21:00	20.3 kB

View Files

Grade 5 Out of 5

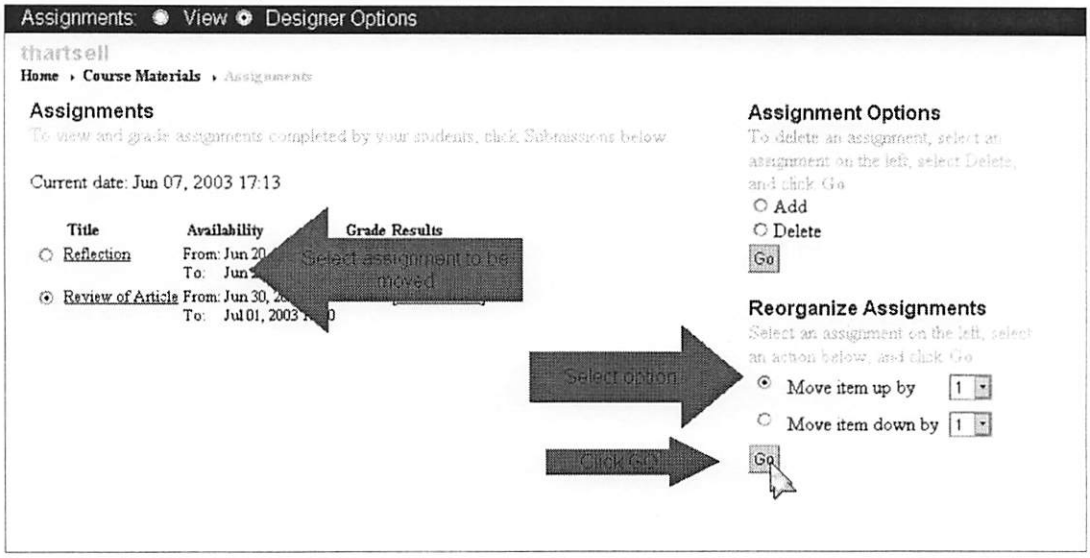
Comments

```
I think the idea is a good one and workable in an online
environment.  ALthough you will not be able to "keep" the
WebCT course at the end, you will still have the materials
to use in another program (you can still use Netscape
Composer to create the course at a later time).
```

Grade Cancel

The last aspects about the Assignment Drop Box are the ordering and deleting of assignments. Like the Lessons, assignments can be reordered by moving them up or down. The procedures are the same. Select the assignment, click on the option (move up or down), and click on GO.

To delete an assignment, chose the Delete option and click on GO. The assignment will now be removed from the Assignment Drop Box.



CONTENTS

- Creating Discussion Threads
- Customizing Chat Rooms
- Using E-mail
- Overview of the Whiteboard

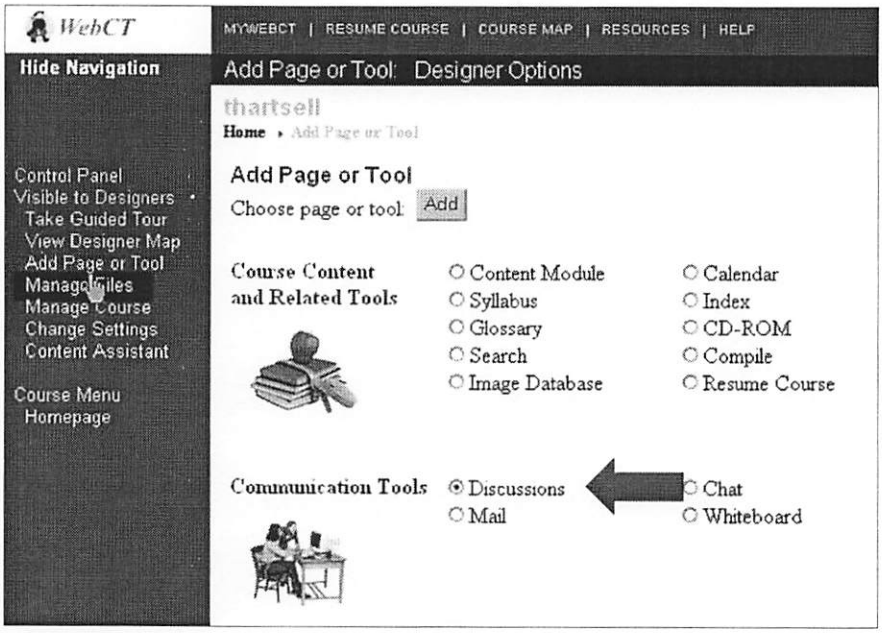
Communication Tools

Communication in online courses is vital to successful learning. Without frequent or adequate communication between teacher-student and student-student, learning cannot take place. Stories such as instructors not replying to e-mails, using chat rooms more as a social hour between students, and telling students to use discussion threads but not participating in the discussions themselves (silent observer) are heard quite often. WebCT provides four different communication tools to help facilitate effective communication between instructors and students. In this tutorial handout, only three of these tools will be discussed in detail: 1) Discussion threads, 2) chat rooms, and 3) e-mail. The fourth communication tool is the whiteboard. Although integrating the whiteboard into your courses is not required, you can still opt to have that option available under your Communications area.

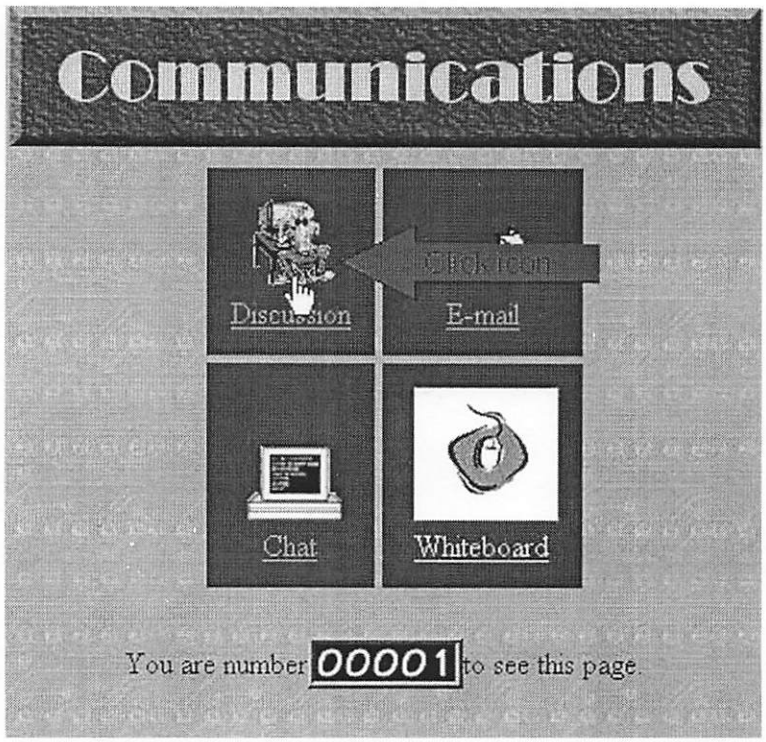
Creating and Managing Discussion Threads

Discussion threads are a good way to manage multiple responses to a given question or thought. Unlike chat, students' responses are saved into an archive that can later be viewed. In addition, discussion threads allow students more time in responding to comments given by others in class. Because discussions threads are asynchronous (not time restricted), students can participate when they want to and take as long as they need to respond. Unlike e-mail, discussion threads can be seen by everyone involved in the discussion. E-mail can be sent to more than one individual at a time. However, e-mail cannot communicate the evolving discussion that is taking place. Therefore, discussion threads are a good method for keeping track of participation and communicating to everyone in online courses.

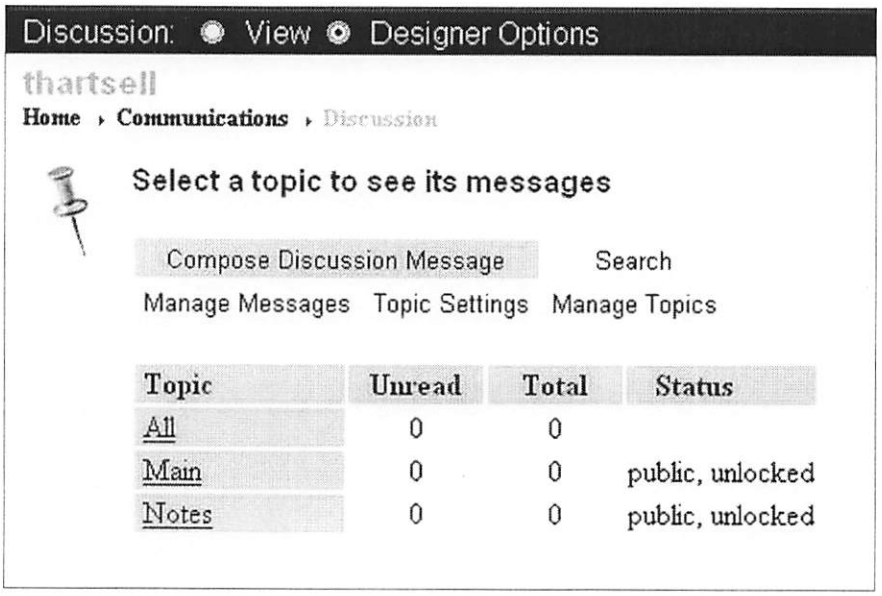
To integrate discussion threads into your courses, go to the Communications (Tools) area of your course. If you have not set up the discussion page yet, please do so now. Refer to the Customizing the Layout handout on *Adding and Deleting Pages*. When you setup the page for Discussion threads, use the *Discussions* option under the **Add Page or Tool** window (see graphic on other page)



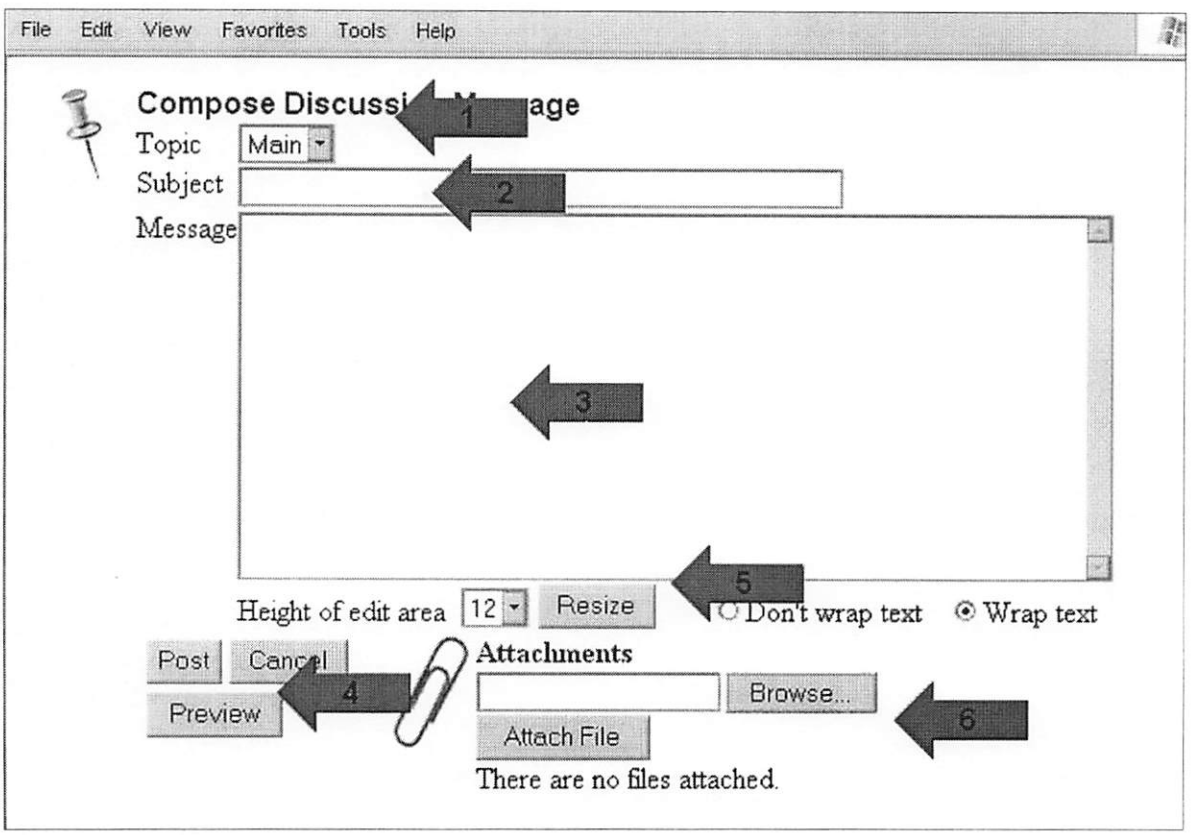
Once you have added the *Discussions* tool under your *Communications* area of the course, click on the Discussion Threads icon. Once you are under the Discussions window, click on *Designer Options* view.



You should see a window like the one shown below. The appearance does not look that much different between the regular *View* and *Designer Options* view, so please be sure that you are in *Designer Options* view.



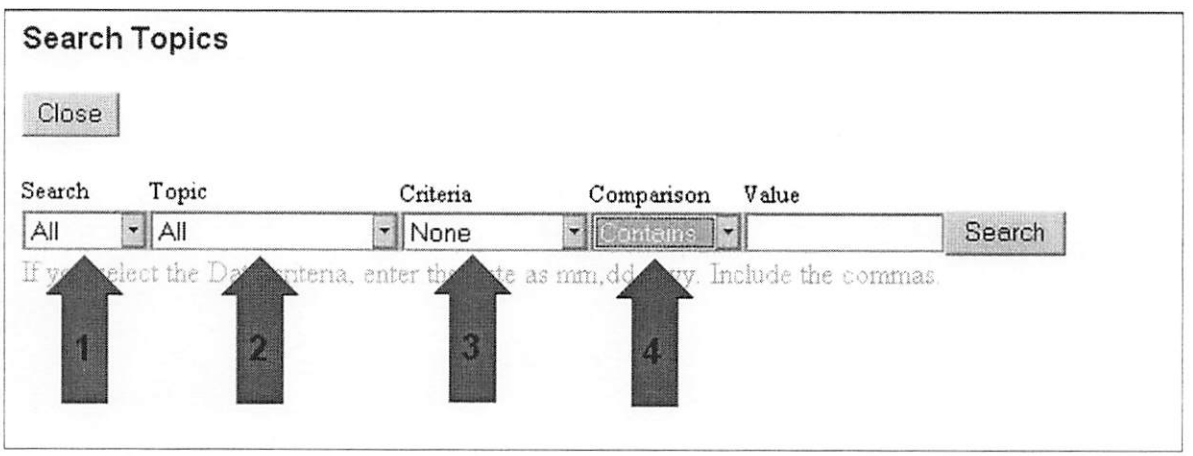
There are several areas in the Discussions window that instructors should be aware of in WebCT. First, let us review the top menu under the *Select a topic to see its messages* title. Click on the *Compose Discussion Message.* As you can see, this is the area in which you compose and post a message to the discussion board.



The functions under the *Compose Discussion Message* are indicated by numbers.

1. **Topic**. This indicates the Discussion Folder in which the response will go under.
2. **Subject**. Type in a title for the message/response.
3. **Message**. Type the message/response in this area.
4. **Post, Cancel, and Preview**. Click on one of the options to POST or send the message, CANCEL the message, or PREVIEW the message before posting.
5. **Size and Wrap.** You can alter the size of the message window and/or select the wrap option.
6. **Attachments.** Attaching files to discussion messages can be performed in this area. Click on BROWSE to locate the file and click on ATTACH FILE before posting.

Now, click on the *Search* option. A window like the following graphic should appear that will allow you to search the archived messages.



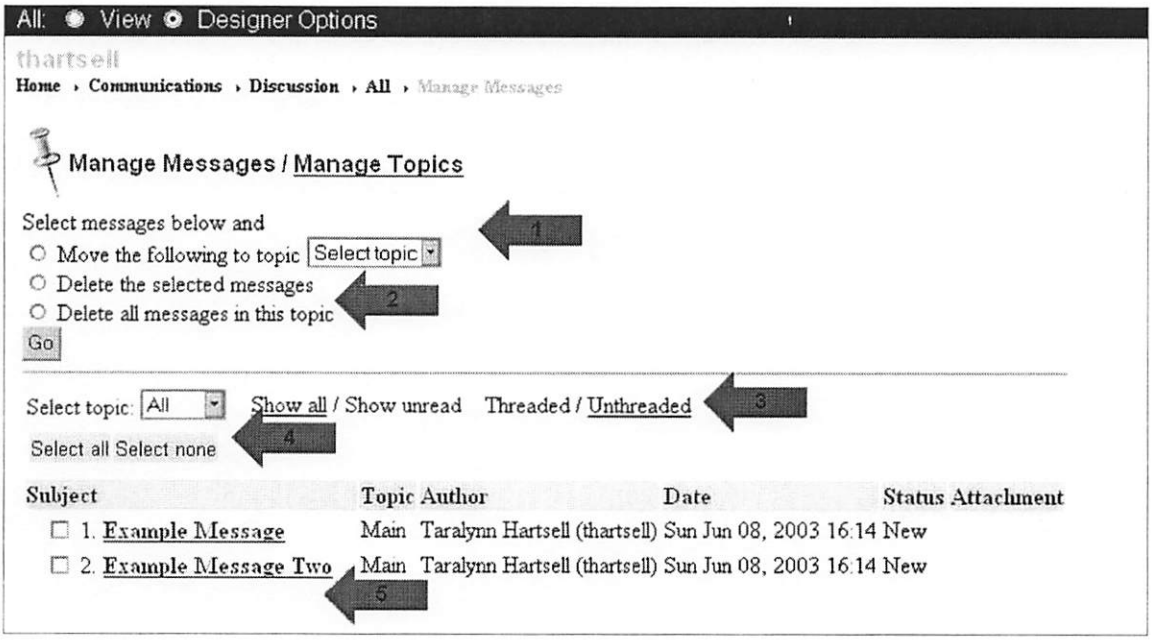
The functions under the *Search Topics* window are indicated by numbers.

1. **Search**. Conduct search for either all of the messages or just the unread messages.
2. **Topic.** Select which discussion folder to search.
3. **Criteria.** Select among various criteria such as name, subject, date, etc.
4. **Comparison.** Use comparison search values such as contains, before, after, starts with, etc.

When you close the Search Topics window, you will be taken to the *Discussion Messages: All* window. Click on Discussion in the breadcrumb trail to return. Now, click on the *Manage Messages* option. You will see a window like the one displayed on the following page.

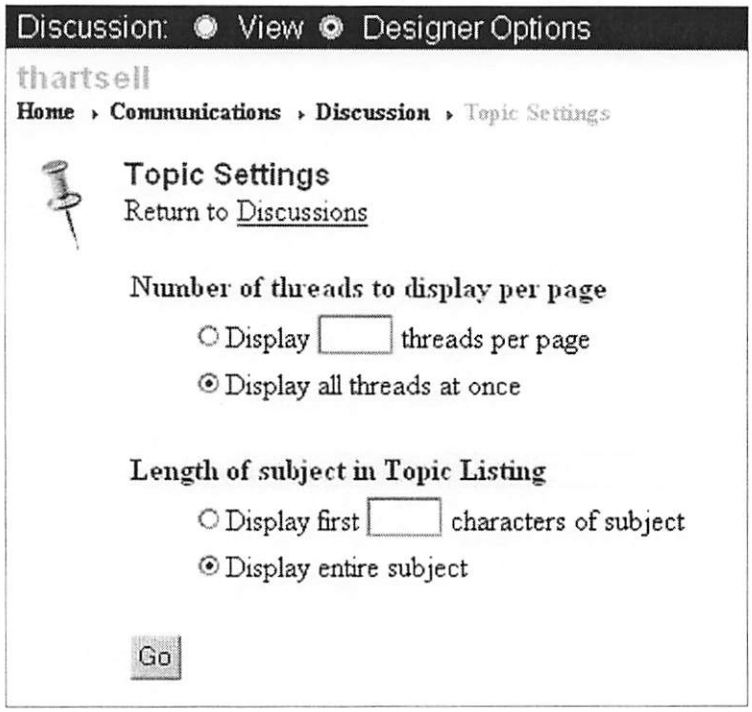
The functions under the *Manage Messages* window are indicated by numbers.

1. **Move message**. Move the message to another folder.
2. **Delete message**. Delete either the selected messages or all messages.
3. **Select topic, Show, and Threaded**. Select among different options such as which folder to view messages, show all the messages or just show the unread messages, and whether to display the threads or not.
4. **Select all or none**. Choose which messages to be selected.
5. **Message area**. Displays the messages/postings by Subject, Topic, Author, Date, Status, and Attachment.

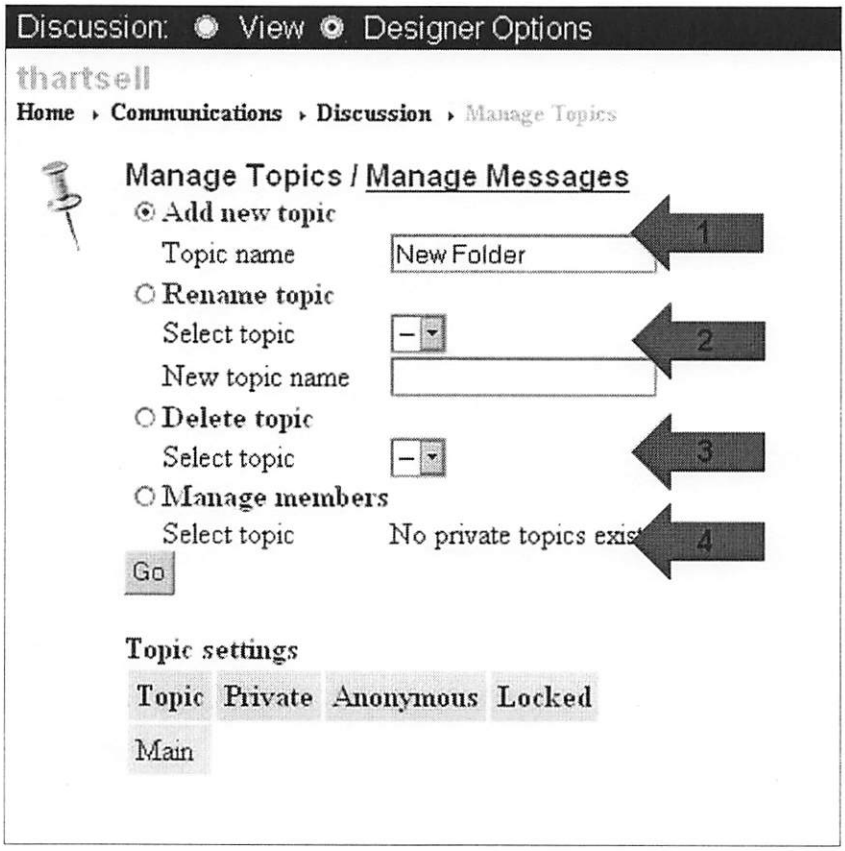


Although you can go to Manage Topics from this window, please return to the Discussions window by clicking on Discussion in the breadcrumb trail. We will review the Manage Topics area later.

Click on the *Topics Settings* option. In this window, you have the options to set how many threads to display at once as well as setting up the maximum number of characters to be seen in the Subject area. These options are more for determining how students (and instructors) will see the Discussion Threads.

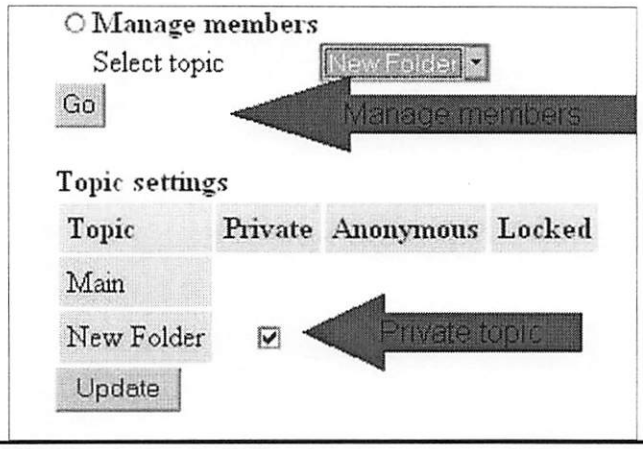


Click on Discussion in the breadcrumb trail to return to main window. Now, click on *Manage Topics*. In this area you can create, edit, and delete folders for the discussion threads.

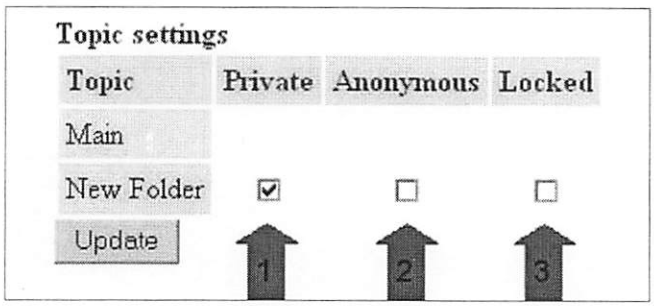


The functions under the *Manage Topics* window are indicated by numbers.

1. **Add new topic**. Create a new topic folder by typing in the name and clicking on GO.
2. **Rename topic**. Rename existing topic folders by selecting the topic and then typing in the new name. Click on GO to finalize.
3. **Delete topic.** Delete topic folders by selecting on the topic and clicking on GO. Note: The Main topic folder cannot be deleted.
4. **Manage members**. Manage who has access to private folders that you have set up for students.

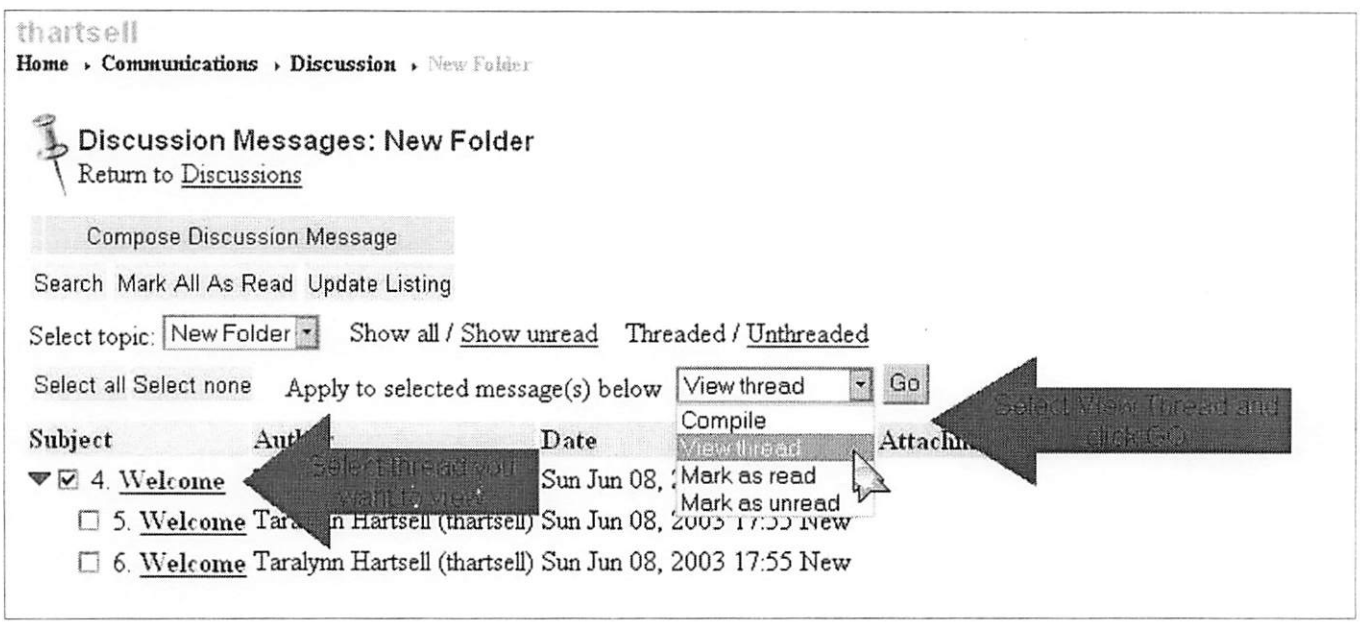


Let us create a topic folder. Select Add Topic and type in a name (I used New Folder). Click on the GO button to finalize. Now, you should see the new topic folder under the Main (and maybe notes) folder. Once you see the new topic folder, three options should be available: 1) private, 2) anonymous, and 3) locked.

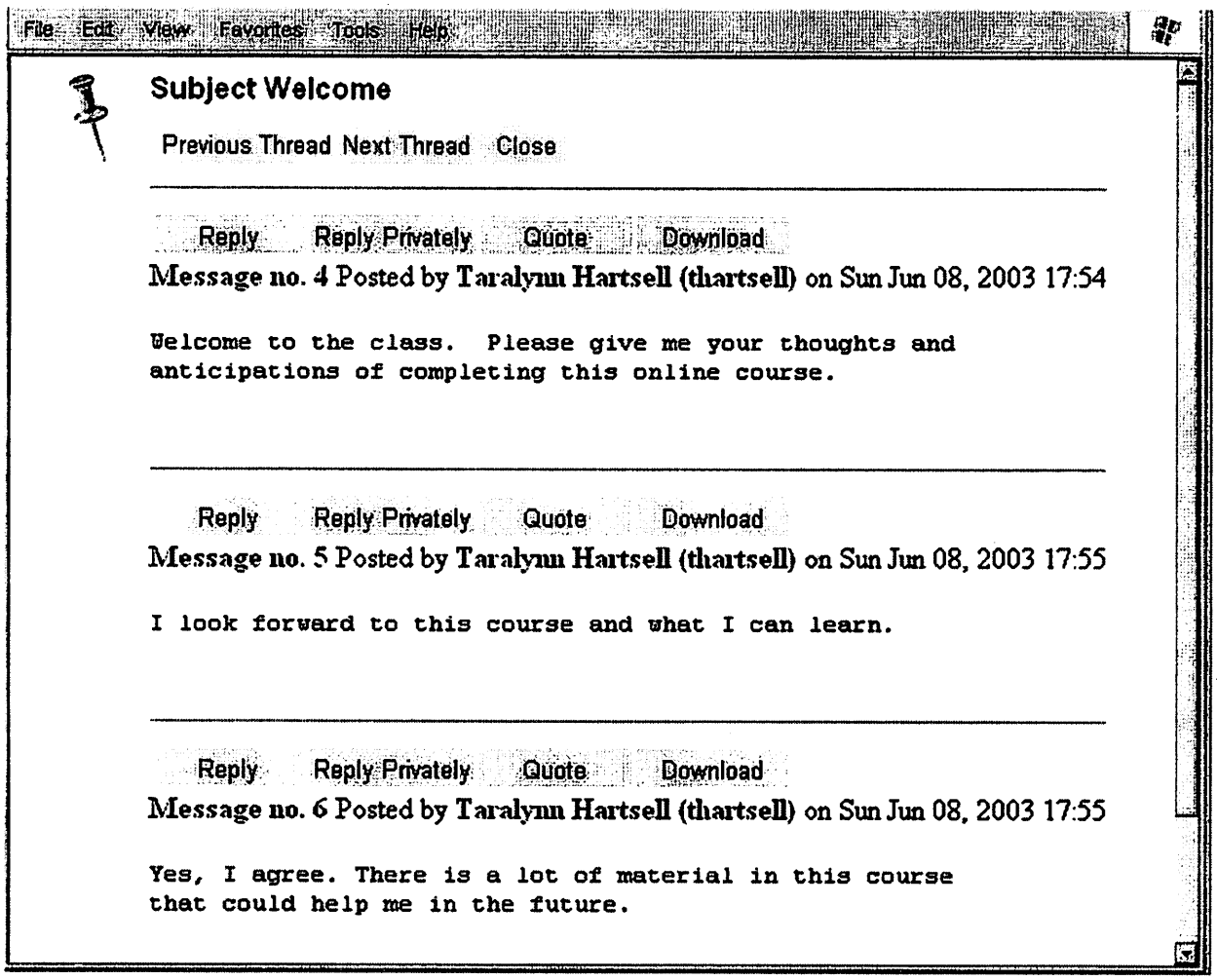


When you want to compile a **Private** list for your students, select the *Private* option and choose the student members involved. **Anonymous** is an option that does not show students names when they post responses to the threads. Therefore, for sensitive issues, the anonymous feature may be good option to utilize. Finally, the **Locked** option allows instructors to prevent students from adding postings to the topic.

Before leaving this area of discussion threads, there is a nice option for instructors and students to view all of the threads for a particular posting/topic that they can later download or print. To do this, go to the Discussion Messages of the **topic folder** you want (in this case I went to *New Folder*). Click on the thread of your choice, and go over to the area *Apply to selected messages below* area. There, choose *View thread* and click on GO.



Now, students and instructors can view the entire thread. In addition, they have the option of printing or saving the thread to disk. This can be a useful log for both students and instructors in terms of keeping up with the thread and its development.



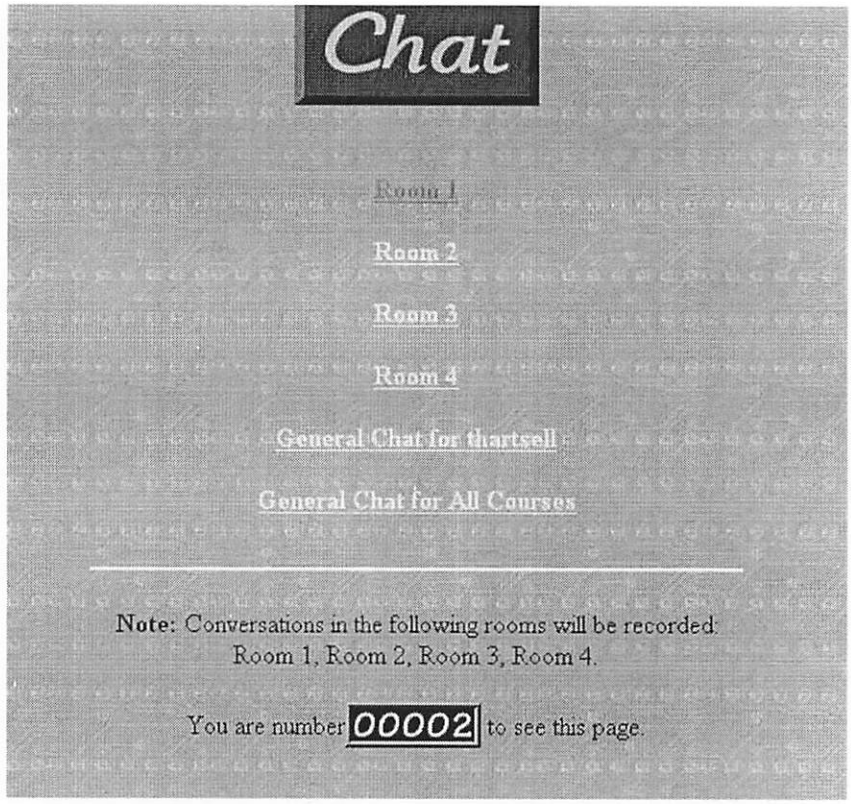
Customizing Chat Rooms

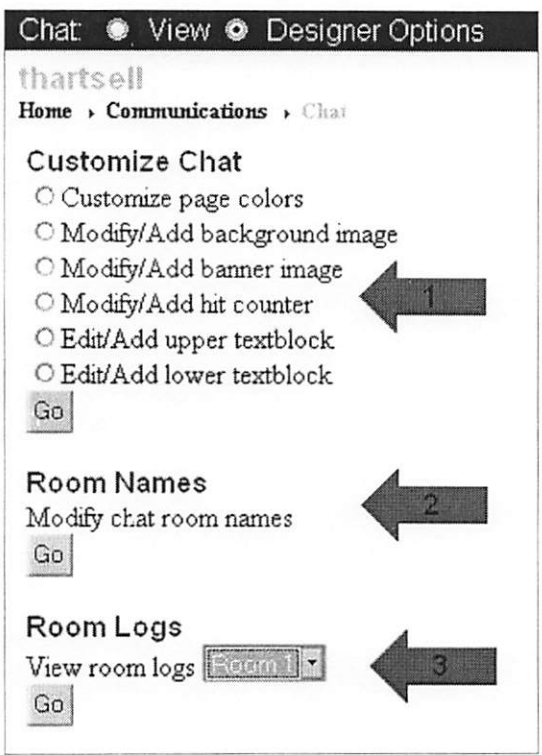
For real-time synchronous discussions, chat is the communication tool to use. Many online instructors have required chat times for students to communicate. Group work is often completed using chat as a form of communication between group members. In addition, many instructors use chat as online office hours to answer questions concerning the course assignments and materials.

In WebCT, four Chat Rooms are made available to students enrolled in a particular course. Two other chat rooms are made available to students at a much larger scale.

As you can see by the graphic to the right, Rooms 1 to 4 are exclusively made for students enrolled in a given course. A General Chat area is available for all students enrolled in online courses taught by a particular instructor. Finally, there is a General Chat area for all online students enrolled at a given institution.

Other than the two General Chat rooms, dialogue between student-teacher and student-student are recorded. A log is created by WebCT that reports who said what at a given time in a particular chat room.



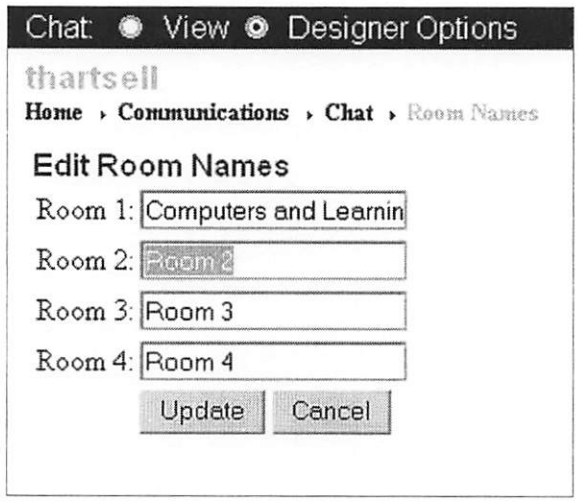


For your course, you will change the names of the chat rooms (1 to 4) that more specifically address the topics of the course. Also, you may want to ask some of your colleagues to participate so that you can see how the log works.

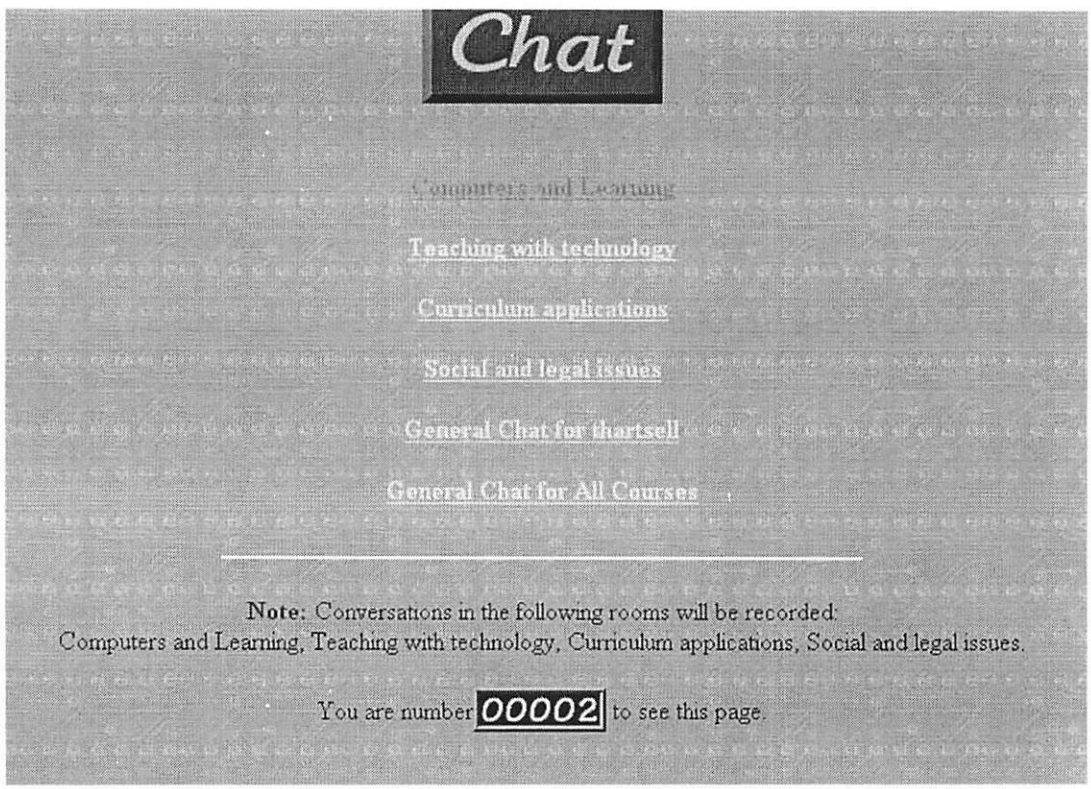
To alter the names of the chat rooms, go to the Chat page and click on *Designer Options* view to see what you can do as an instructor. The graphic to the left shows three areas in which instructors can alter or use.

The first area is the **Customize Chat** options. Here, you can alter the page colors, background image, add/modify a banner, etc. The second area allows you to modify **Room Names** so that the chat rooms can be geared toward meeting course objectives. The third area allows instructors to view **Room Logs** of conversations that have taken place. Instructors could use the logs to backtrack to comments said or evaluate student participation.

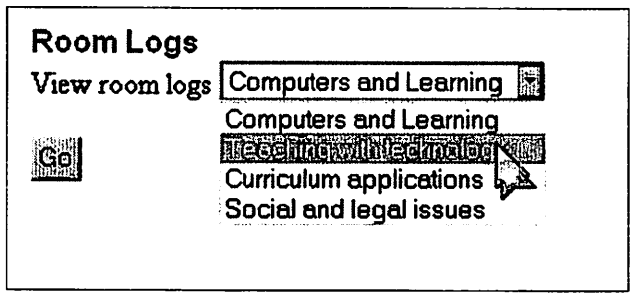
To alter the *Room Names*, click on the GO button. The default titles are Room 1, Room 2, Room 3, and Room 4. To alter the names of the four rooms, type in the new title of each of room. After typing, click on the UPDATE button to finalize the change.



The four rooms should now have the new titles. You cannot alter the titles of the General Chat rooms, but at least you can make adjustments to the first four. This will help make the chat rooms more course-specific.



To view chat room logs, select the room you want to view and click on GO. Any conversation that has taken place in that room can now be reviewed by the instructor.



The following graphic is what a Chat Room Log may look like. As you may notice, the log displays the time and date that someone entered the room, what he/she said, and when that person logged out of the room. Instructors have the option to *Clear* the room logs if it becomes too long.

thartsell

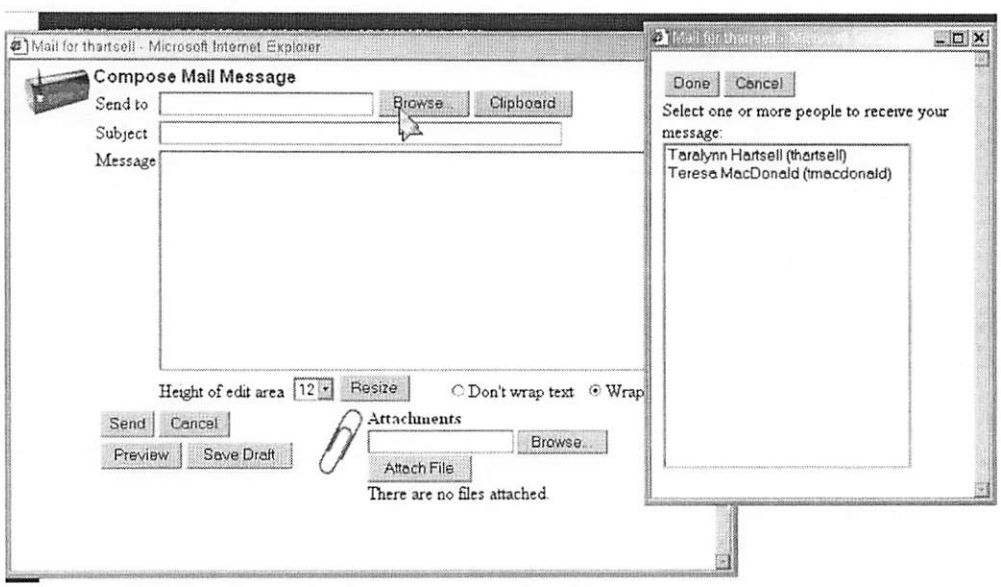
Home ▸ **Communications** ▸ **Chat** ▸ Room Logs

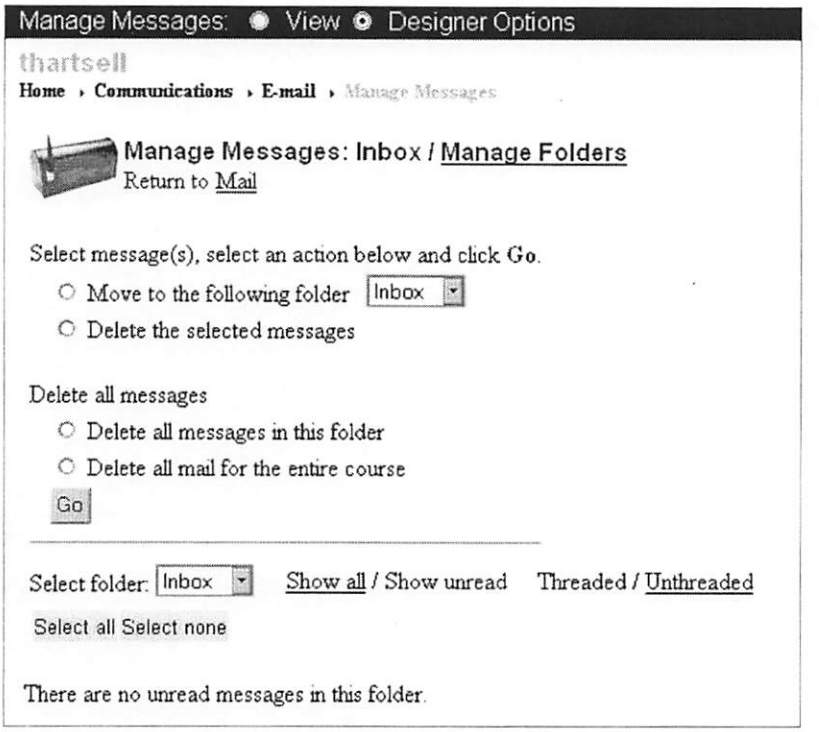
```
*^*****************************************************************************
New session has begun in thartsell_Room2.
Sun Jun 08, 2003 17:48
*^*****************************************************************************

*+**** Taralynn--Hartsell entered thartsell_Room2. Sun Jun 08, 2003 17:48

*-**** Taralynn--Hartsell left thartsell_Room2. Sun Jun 08, 2003 17:48

*****************************************************************************
Session in thartsell_Room2 ended (all participants have left).
Sun Jun 08, 2003 17:48
*****************************************************************************

*^*****************************************************************************
New session has begun in thartsell_Room2.
Sun Jun 08, 2003 17:50
*^*****************************************************************************

*+**** Taralynn--Hartsell entered thartsell_Room2. Sun Jun 08, 2003 17:50

Taralynn  Hartsell>>Hello room!

Taralynn  Hartsell>>My name is Taralynn Hartsell and I am the instructor.

Taralynn  Hartsell>>Right now, I am the only one in this chat room.

Taralynn  Hartsell>>I will be waiting for everyone to arrive.

*-**** Taralynn--Hartsell left thartsell_Room2. Sun Jun 08, 2003 17:50
```

Using WebCT E-mail

E-mail in WebCT is similar to other e-mail systems. Compose messages, attachment options, and folder creation are all found within the WebCT mail system. So, learning this form of communication tool is not that difficult. The following graphic displays what the WebCT e-mail system looks like.

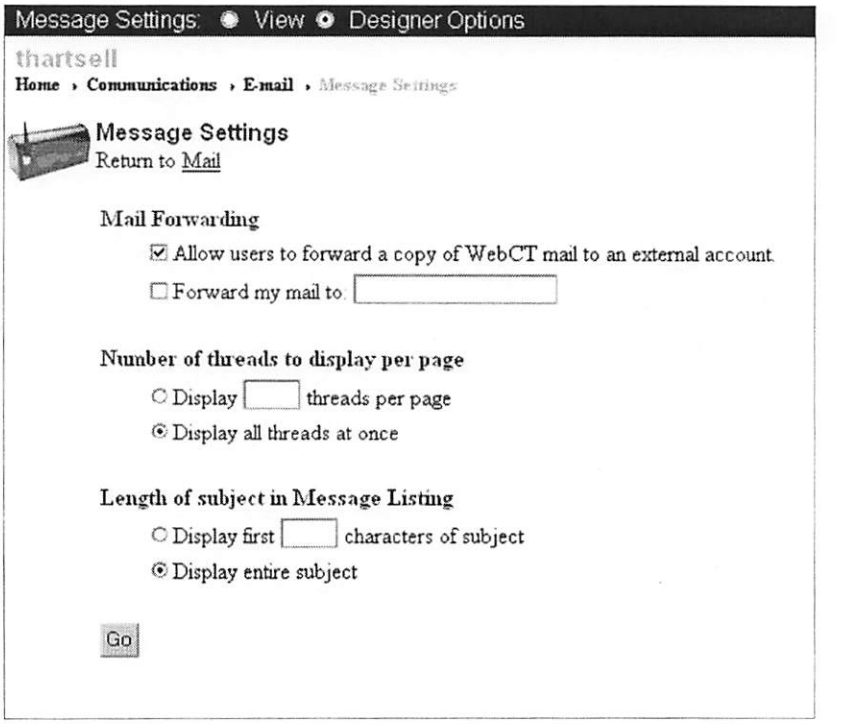
To compose a message, click on *Compose Mail Message*. In that window, select who the message is to be sent to (click BROWSE to find enrolled students), a subject heading for the message, the actual typed message, and any attachments. Unlike the *Compose Discussion Message*, you can opt to save a draft of the e-mail in a separate folder for later editing.

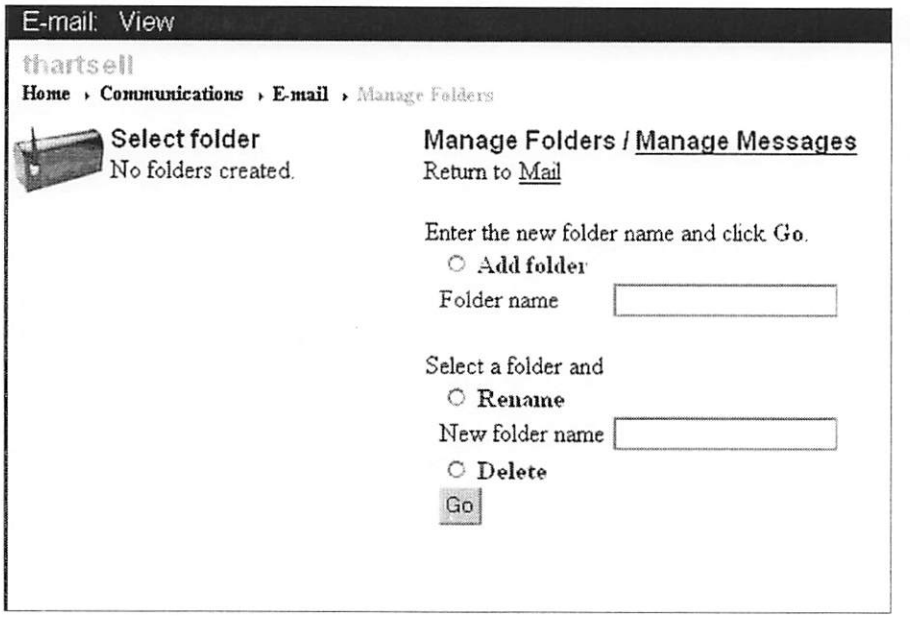




For moving and deleting messages, click on the *Managing Messages* option. Here, you have the option of moving messages from one folder to another, deleting selected messages, and deleting all messages in a given folder or for the entire course.

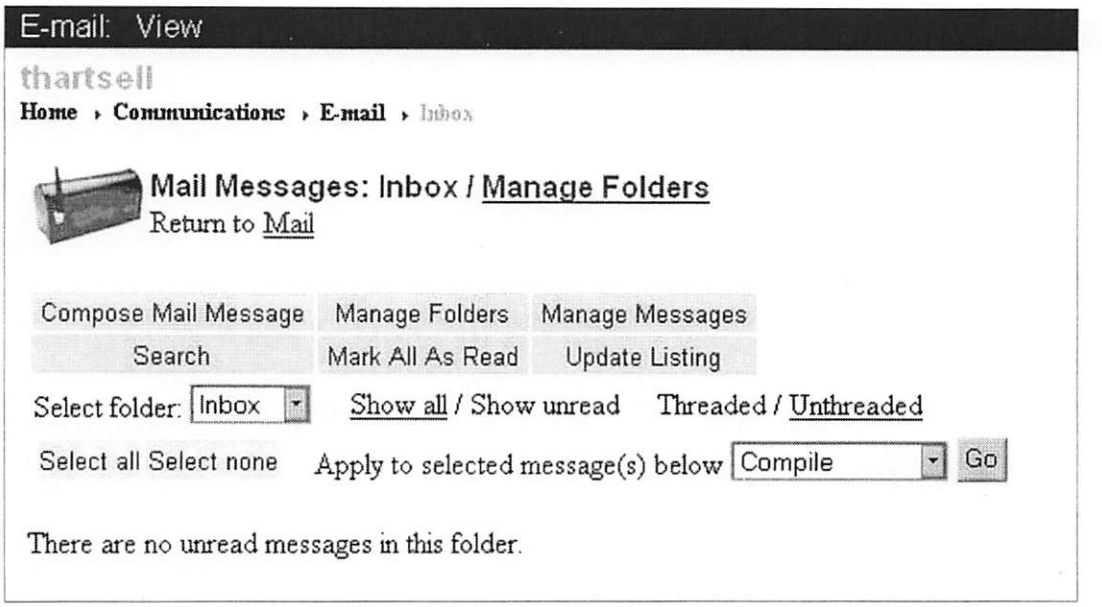
For changing the settings of your mailbox, click on the *Manage Settings* option. Here, you have the option to forward e-mail to external e-mail accounts, display the number of threads/messages, and changing the length of characters in the subject heading area.





To add, delete, or rename mail folders, click on the *Manage Folders* option. Here, you can add folders by selecting **Add folder** and typing in a new name. To **rename** folders, select an existing folder and type in the new folder name. To delete a folder, select an existing folder and chose delete. You will need to click on GO to finalize each action.

To view messages in a given folder, click on the folder in the Main E-mail window. The graphic below displays the contents of the Inbox. There are no messages in the Inbox right now. However, if there were some read and unread messages in the Inbox, the messages would appear toward the bottom.



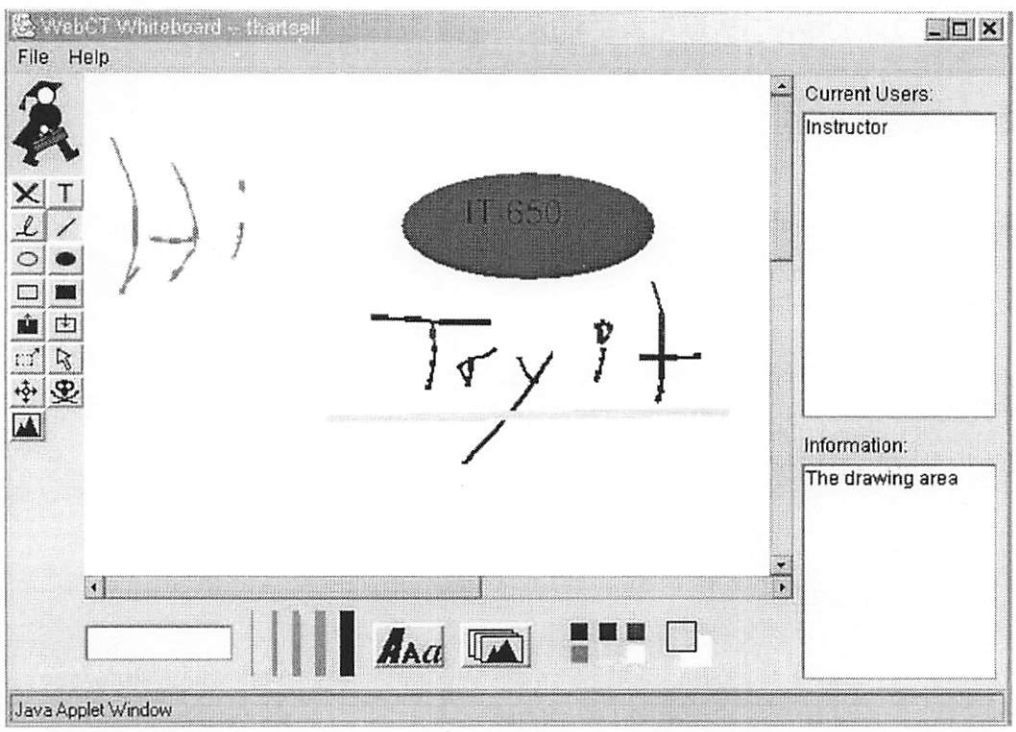
Overview of the Whiteboard

The whiteboard is the fourth communication tool and is used as a drawing tool that may be used during an online discussion. This tool allows users to type in text, draw objects, insert graphics, and make modifications. It is especially useful for drawing and viewing diagrams in real-time.

You will need to experiment with the whiteboard to see all it can do. Remember, the whiteboard is not a requirement, but you may want to play with the tool to understand what it offers.

Once you add the Whiteboard tool to your course Communications page, click on the *Whiteboard* icon to go to the following screen. There, click on START WHITEBOARD to execute the program.

The whiteboard window will look like the following graphic. Experiment with the whiteboard to view its online features and decide whether the whiteboard is a useful tool for your course.



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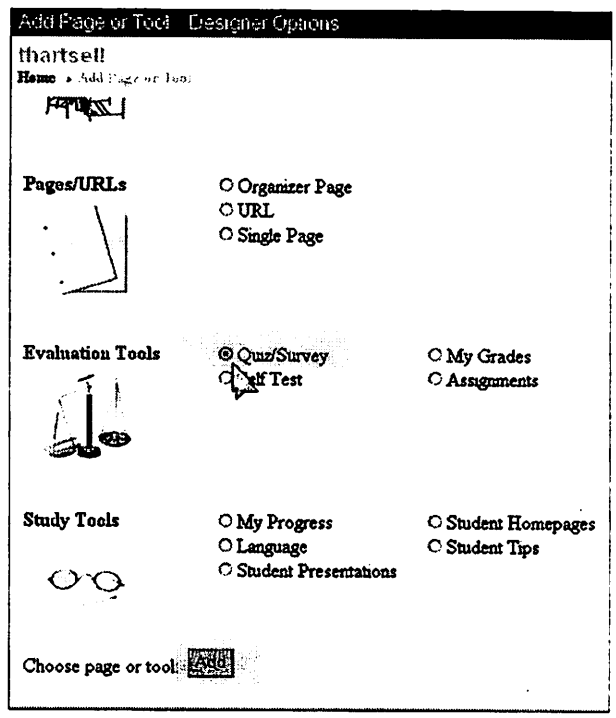
- Overview
- Creating Quizzes/ Surveys
- Building the Questions Database
- Adding Questions to Quizzes
- Customizing Quizzes and Surveys

Quiz and Survey Tools

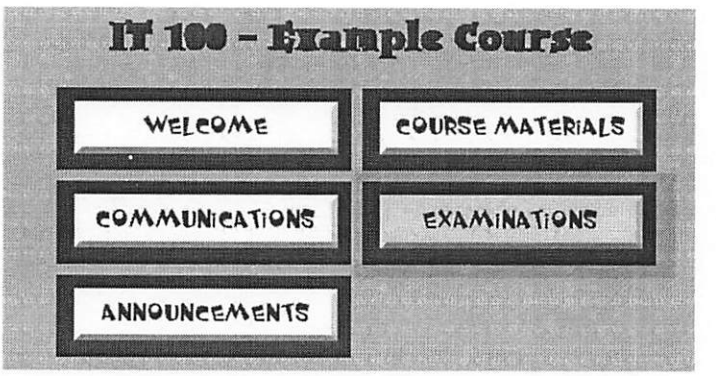
WebCT has a quiz and survey tool function that allows online instructors to create and post quizzes/surveys for students to take. These online quizzes can be graded automatically and provide feedback to students for correct and incorrect responses. In this tutorial handout, an overview of the Quiz and Survey Tool will be given along with some instructions on how to create and customize the Quiz and Survey Tool. In addition, the Questions Database in WebCT will be reviewed to explain how you can build the database for your quizzes/surveys.

Overview of Quizzes and Surveys

You will need to use the *Quiz* and *Survey Management* tool to add quizzes and surveys to your course. If you do not already have a quiz or survey page as part of your course, then you must add the quiz tool now to your course *Homepage* or an *Organizer* page. To add that page, refer back to the tutorial handout on Customizing the Layout and go to the section entitled *Adding and Deleting Pages*. When you setup the page for Examinations or Quizzes, use the *Quiz/Survey* option under the **Add Page or Tool** window (see graphic to right).



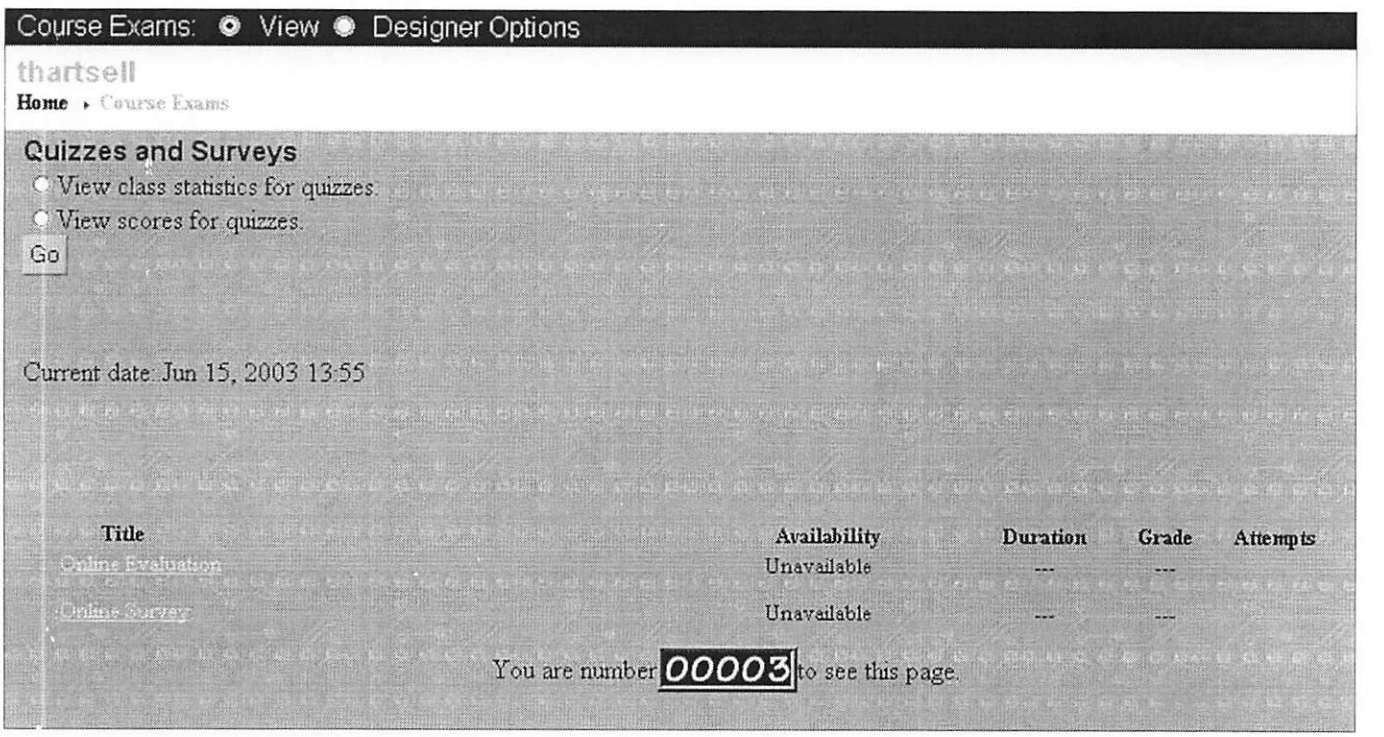
After performing this step, be sure to tell WebCT where you want the Quiz/Survey page to be located. I placed my Quiz tool on the Homepage and entitled it as *Examinations*. But, you can use a title that is most appropriate for your course.



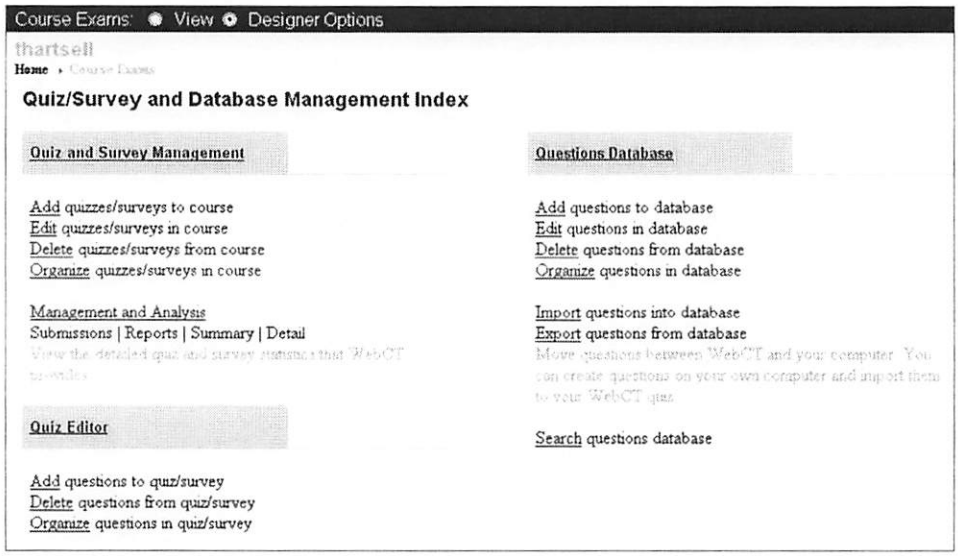
Creating Quizzes and Surveys

After adding the Quiz/Survey tool to your WebCT course, the next task is to create the online quiz or survey. Go to the **Course Exams** page by clicking on the icon for your quiz/examination.

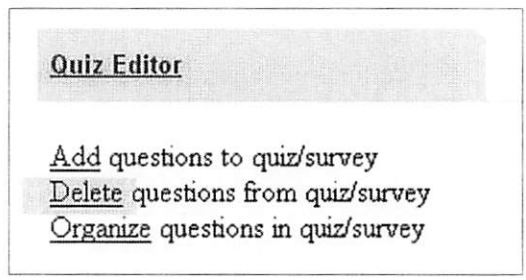
You should arrive to a page that will look something like the graphic below. This graphic portrays the student view of the **Course Exams** page. Right now, there is an Online Evaluation form and an Online Survey form. However, you may not have these two in your **Course Exams** page.



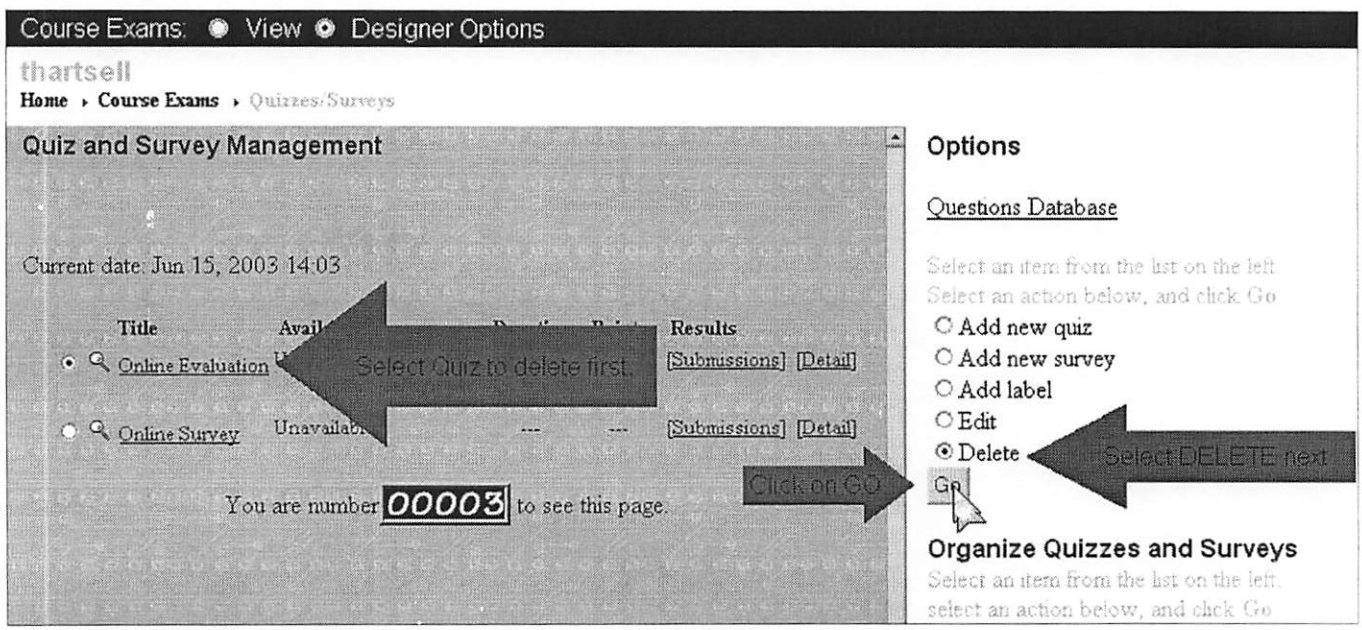
Click on the *Designer Options* view to go into the instructor's editing view. Here, you have several options as the instructor.



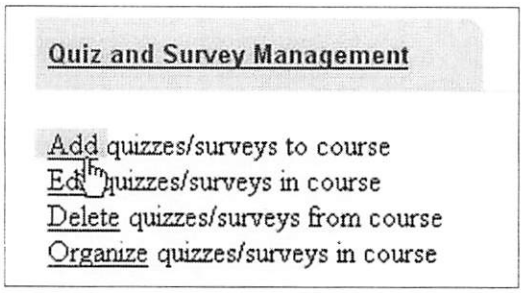
The first thing you may want to do is to delete or remove the existing quizzes. This way you can start from scratch and have better control over the design of the quizzes. To delete quizzes, go to the *Quiz Editor* area and click on the Delete option.



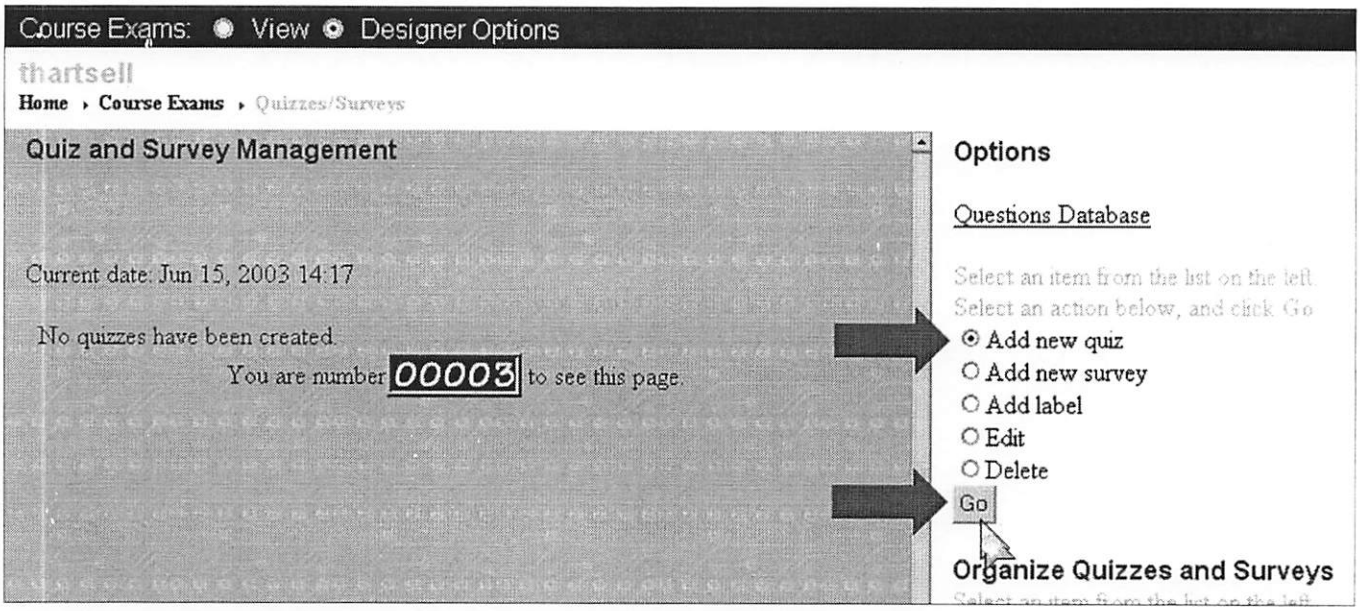
In the next window, select the quiz you want to delete and click on the *Delete* option located under the *Options* area. Click on the GO button to finalize. A few warning messages will appear. If you want to continue with the deletion, click the OK button. Continue deleting all other remaining quizzes.



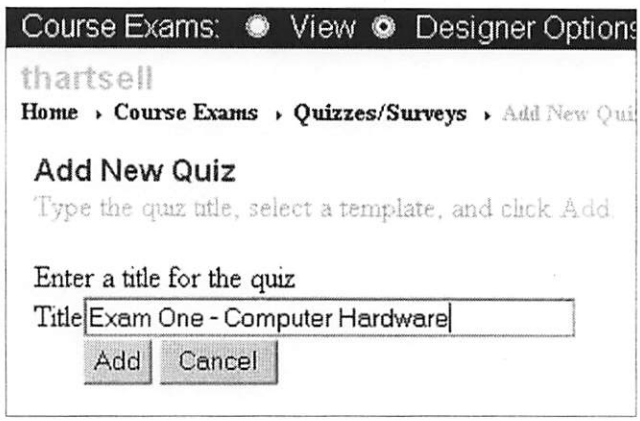
Click on the *Course Exams* link in the breadcrumb trail to return to the previous **Course Exams** page. Here, we will add a quiz. In the *Quiz and Survey Management* area, click on the *Add quizzes/surveys to course* option.



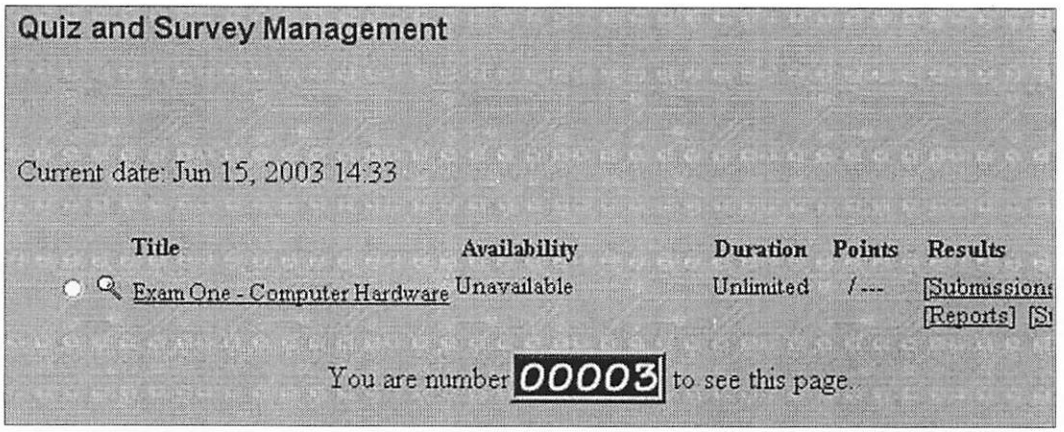
You will then arrive back to the *Quiz and Survey Management* screen where you deleted the previous quizzes. Click on the option *Add new quiz* under the *Options* area. Click on the GO button to proceed.



In the next window, type in the title of your quiz and click on the ADD button to finalize.

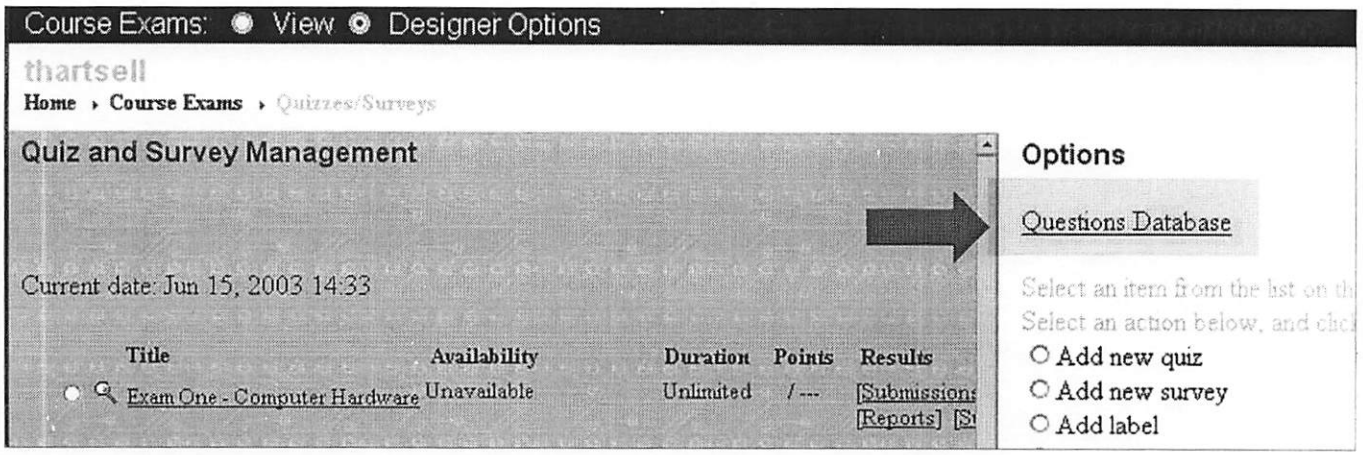


You should now see the new title of the added quiz. NOTE: You have only added the quiz to the *Quiz and Survey Management* list. You must add questions to the Questions Database under the **Course Exams** page to start building your quiz. This will be discussed next.

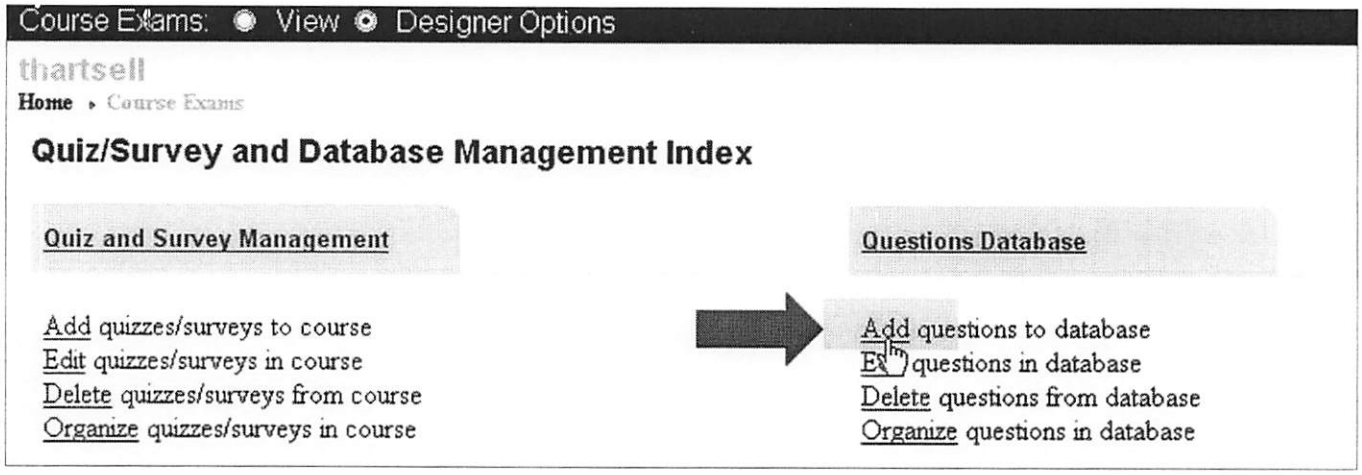


Building the Questions Database

The *Questions Database* contains all of the questions from which you will build your quizzes and surveys. To start building your database, click on the link Questions Database on the *Quiz and Survey Management* page.

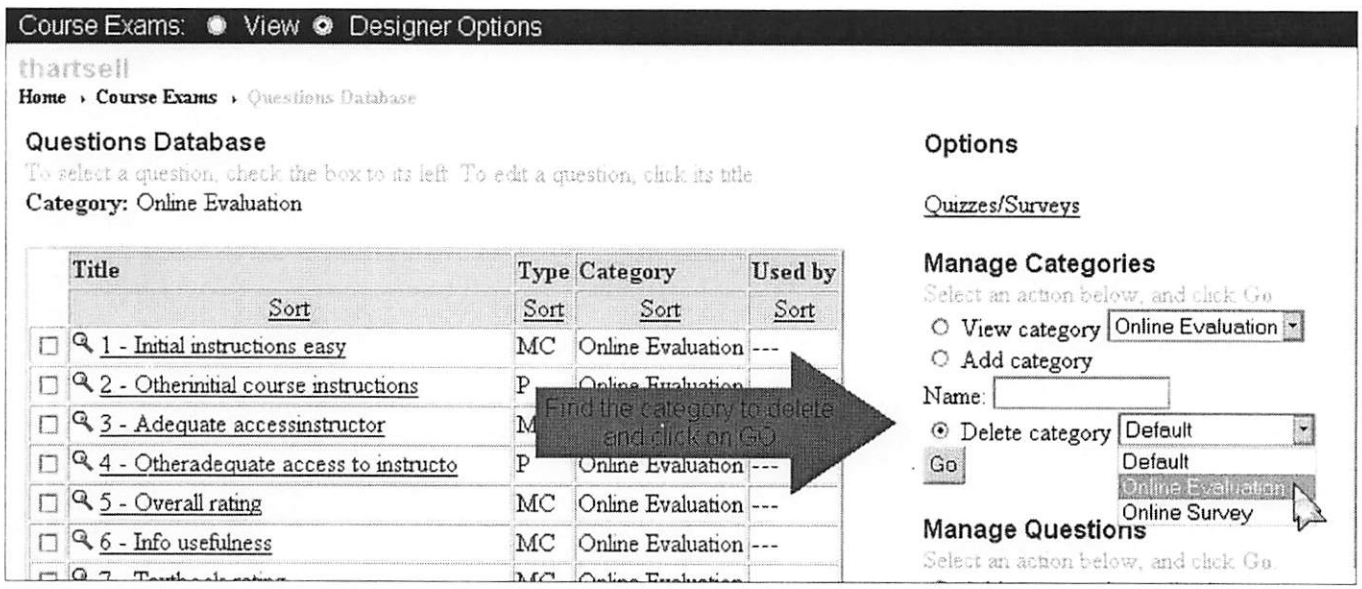


Another way to access this database tool is from the **Course Exams** page. Just click on the link *Add questions to database* (see graphic on next page). Either way, you will arrive to the same place.

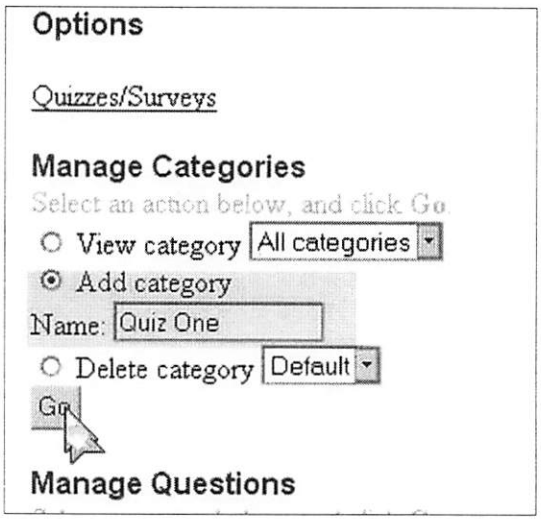


You may see some questions that were already set-up from the previous quizzes we just deleted. So, it is best to delete or remove these questions so we can start clean.

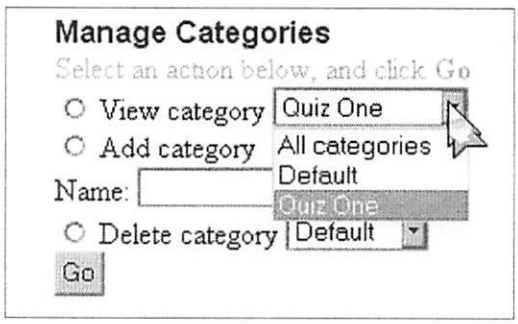
To delete an entire question database, go over the *Manage Categories* area and select the *Delete Category* option. Then, locate the database you want removed by clicking on the down arrow button. I am going to remove both databases that are there. You may only have one to remove. Clicking on the GO button will finalize the deletion. Again, a few warning messages will appear. Just click on the OK button to proceed with the deletion. The graphic below illustrates this process.



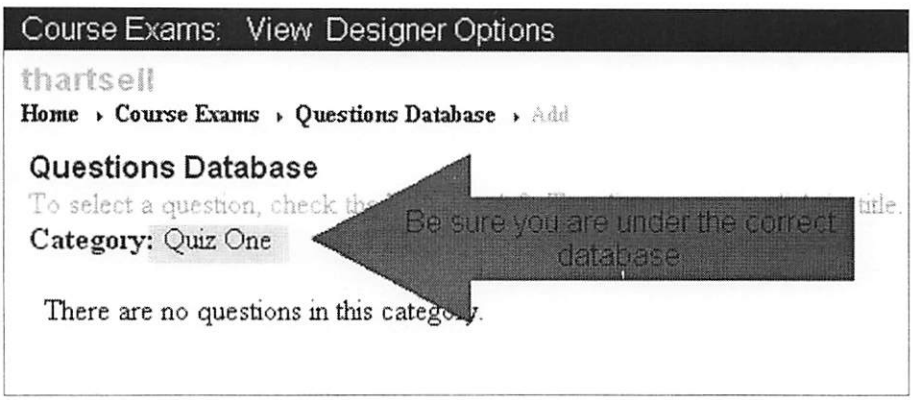
Now, we will need to add a new category to start building our question database. Click on the option *Add category* and type in the Name/Title of the database. Click on the GO button to proceed.



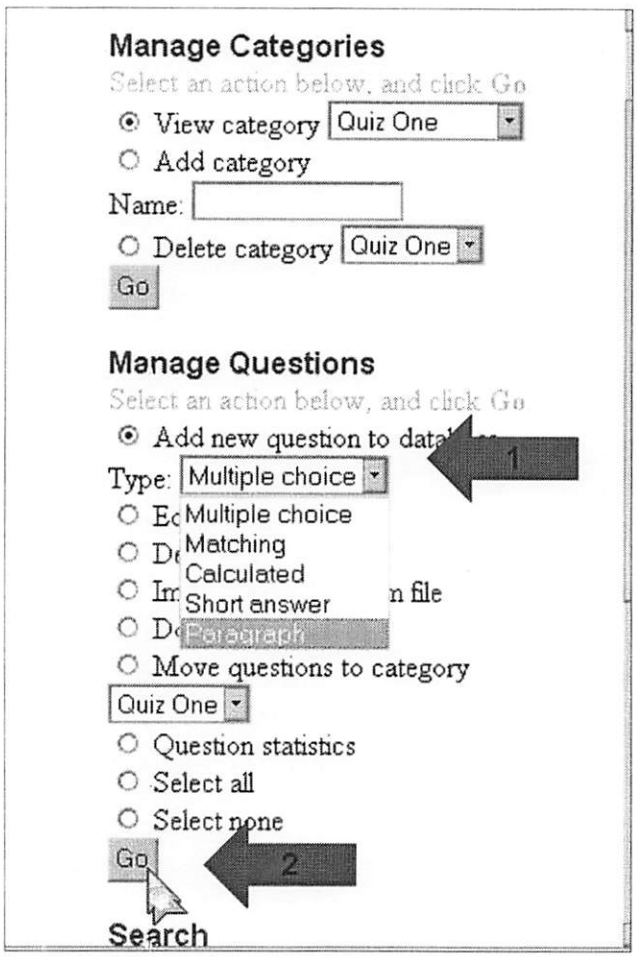
After performing this task, you should be able to see the new category you just created under the *View category* area.



Before adding questions to the database, be sure you are under the correct Category or Questions Database. For instance, I should be under the Quiz One database that I created. You can see where you are by looking at the Category line under the *Questions Database* title like the graphic below.



If you are not there, go over to *View Category* under the Manage Categories section and select the one to view.



To add questions to the database, go down to the section called Manage Questions. Click on the option *Add new question to database*. You must then select the type such as Multiple Choice, Matching, Short Answer, etc. Remember, you will use a variation of these types in your own WebCT course.

Once you select the type of question to add, click on the GO button.

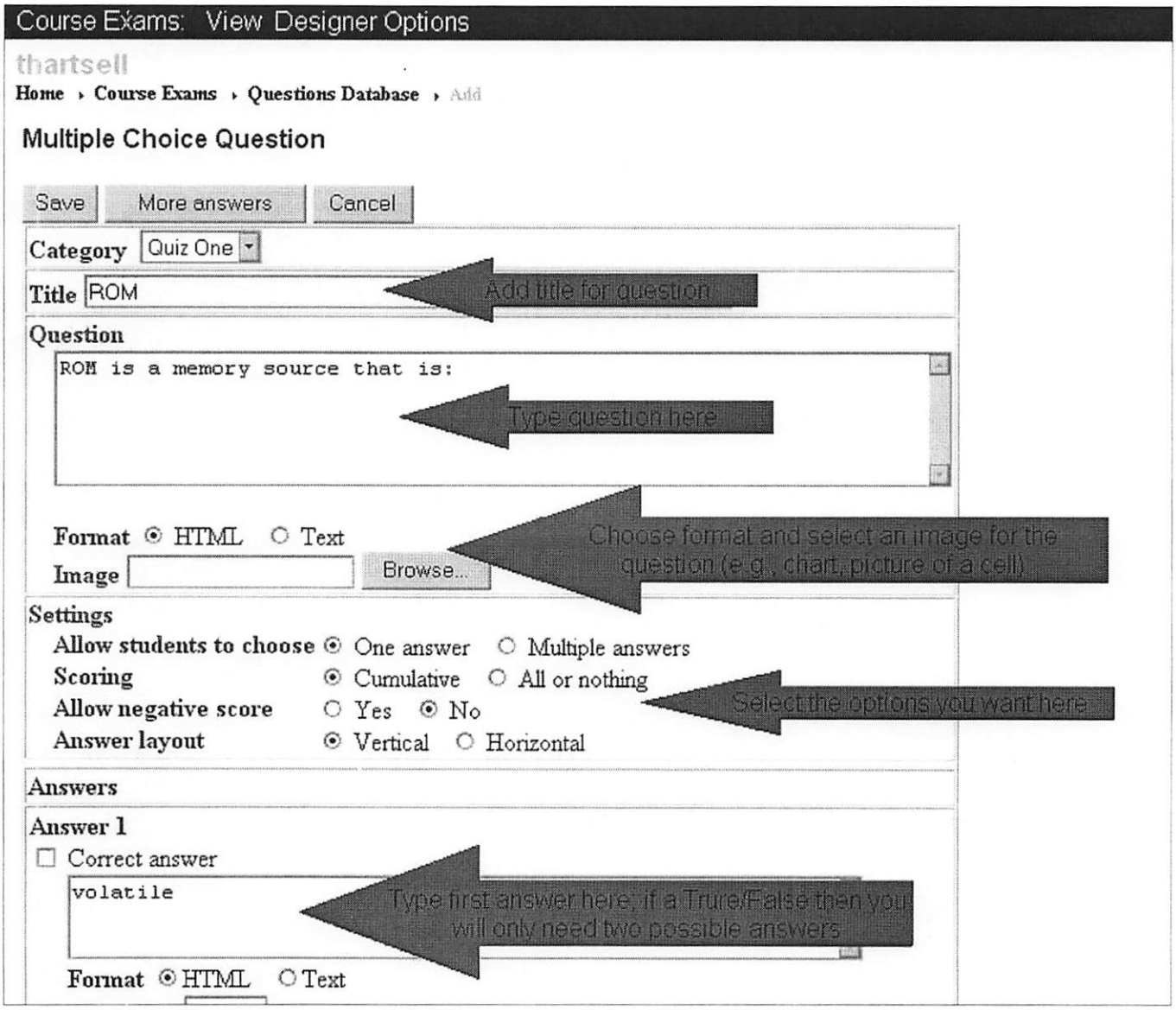
The next few steps are the most time-consuming and cumbersome because these steps have to be repeated for **each** question you add. But in the end, once you have added all the questions, they will remain in the Questions Database for future use.

The following graphics show what needs to be completed for each question. Follow along with the graphic illustrations and you should do fine in building your question database. Each question type will have different options, so please make sure that you select the correct one. Remember, you have to repeat all the steps mentioned for **each** question you add to the database category.

In your own courses, you will need to create two or more quizzes with ten questions each using a variety of question types (e.g., multiple choice, matching). So, design your questions ahead of time before actually going through this process. This may save time in the end.

These illustrations demonstrate how to add a multiple choice question to the *Quiz One* database. If you want to know specifics of what certain things mean (e.g., difference between *Cumulative* and *All or nothing* scoring) go to the following Web site:

http://dl.cice.usm.edu/web-ct/help/en/designer/quiz/quiz_dbI.html



Course Exams: View Designer Options

thartsell

Home › **Course Exams** › **Questions Database** › Add

Format ⊙ HTML ○ Text

Answer 2

☐ Correct answer

transient

Keep adding answers

Format ⊙ HTML ○ Text

Value (%)

Feedback 2

If you want to provide feedback to students, type them here

Format ⊙ HTML ○ Text

Answer 3

☑ Correct answer

If the answer is correct, make sure the Correct Answer box is selected

constant

Format ⊙ HTML ○ Text

Value (%)

Feedback 3

Yes, ROM is permanent and remains on the computer system even when the power is off.

Format ⊙ HTML ○ Text

Answer 4

Hide Navigation

Course Exams: View Designer Options

thartsell

Home › Course Exams › Questions Database › Add

Control Panel
Visible to Designers
Take Guided Tour
View Designer Map
Add Page or Tool
Manage Files
Manage Course
Change Settings
Content Assistant

Course Menu
Homepage

temporary

Format ⊙ HTML ○ Text

Value (%)

Feedback 4

Format ⊙ HTML ○ Text

Answer 5

☐ Correct answer

Format ⊙ HTML ○ Text

Value (%)

Feedback 5

Format ⊙ HTML ○ Text

General feedback

This is where you want to include general comments other than those in the Feedback fields.

Save | More answers | Cancel

Click SAVE to save your question to the database

Add general comments here

If you need more answers click on the button MORE ANSWERS

Course Exams: View Designer Opti

thartsell

Home › Course Exams › Questions Database

Questions Database

To select a question, check the box to its left. To

Category: Quiz One

	Title	Type	Category	Used by
	Sort	Sort	Sort	Sort
☐	ROM	MC	Quiz One	---

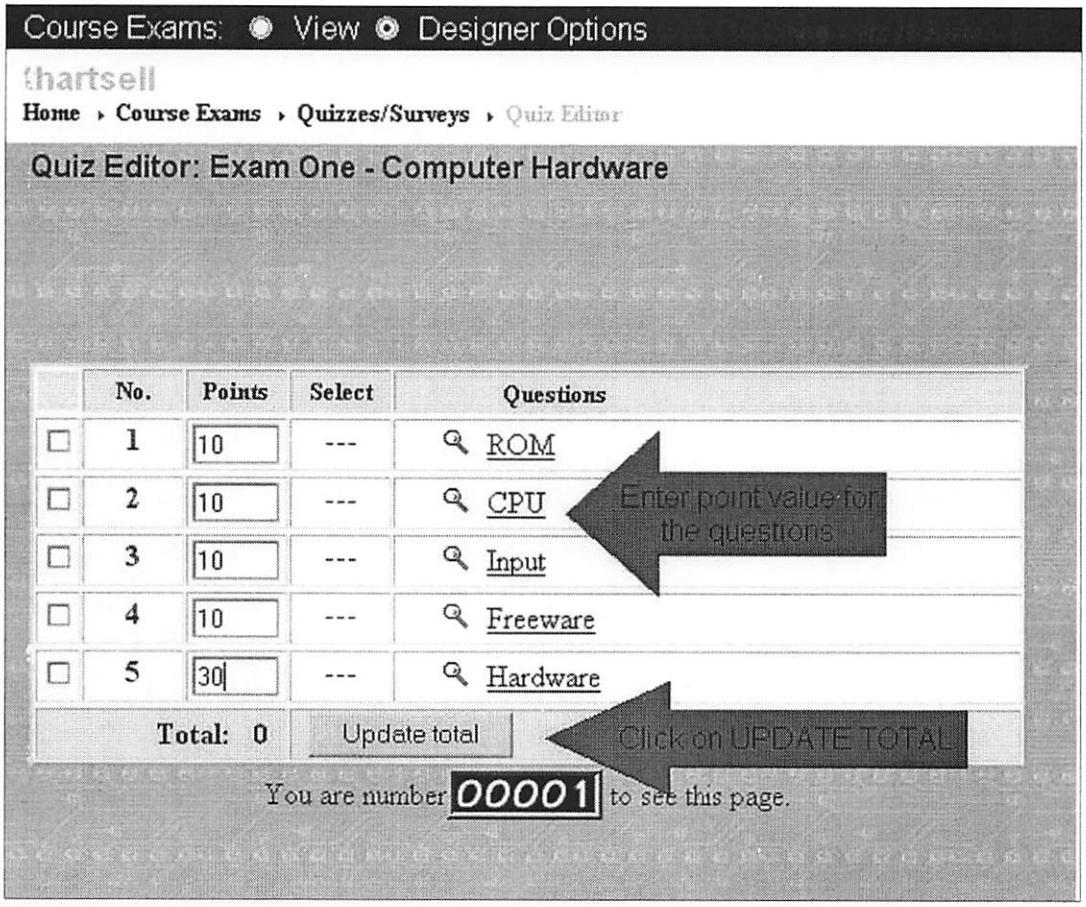
Once you add the new question to the database, you should be able to view the question under the *Questions Database* window like the graphic to the left. If you are wondering what the MC stands for, the MC means multiple choice. So, each question is coded for type.

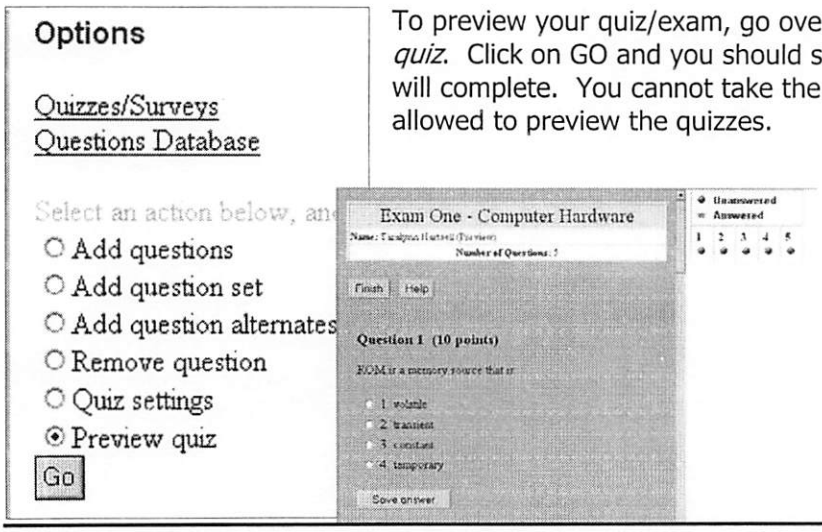
You can always go back to change answers, add feedback, change scoring, etc. to that question. All you need to do is click on the title of the question and you will be taken back to the *Question* page. This time, when you are through making the necessary changes, click on the button SAVE AS NEW to accept the changes.

Now, it is time to build your questions database. Go through the steps of adding questions and remember to use different types of questions (e.g., matching, short answer).

When you click on the quiz you just created the database for, you should begin seeing the list of questions you just answered. However, you will need to return to the *Quiz and Survey Management* page (click on the link *Quizzes/Surveys* in the breadcrumb trail) to view the questions.

Click on the quiz in which you just created the database. You will be taken to a page like the one shown below. Now, you will need to enter the point values for the questions in your quiz. Click on UPDATE TOTAL to finalize.

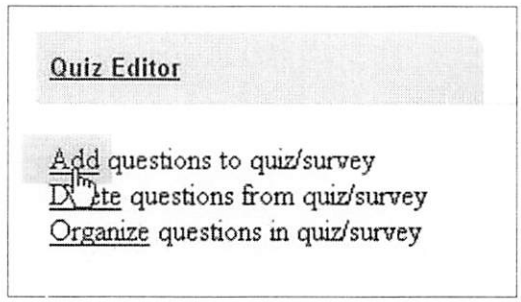




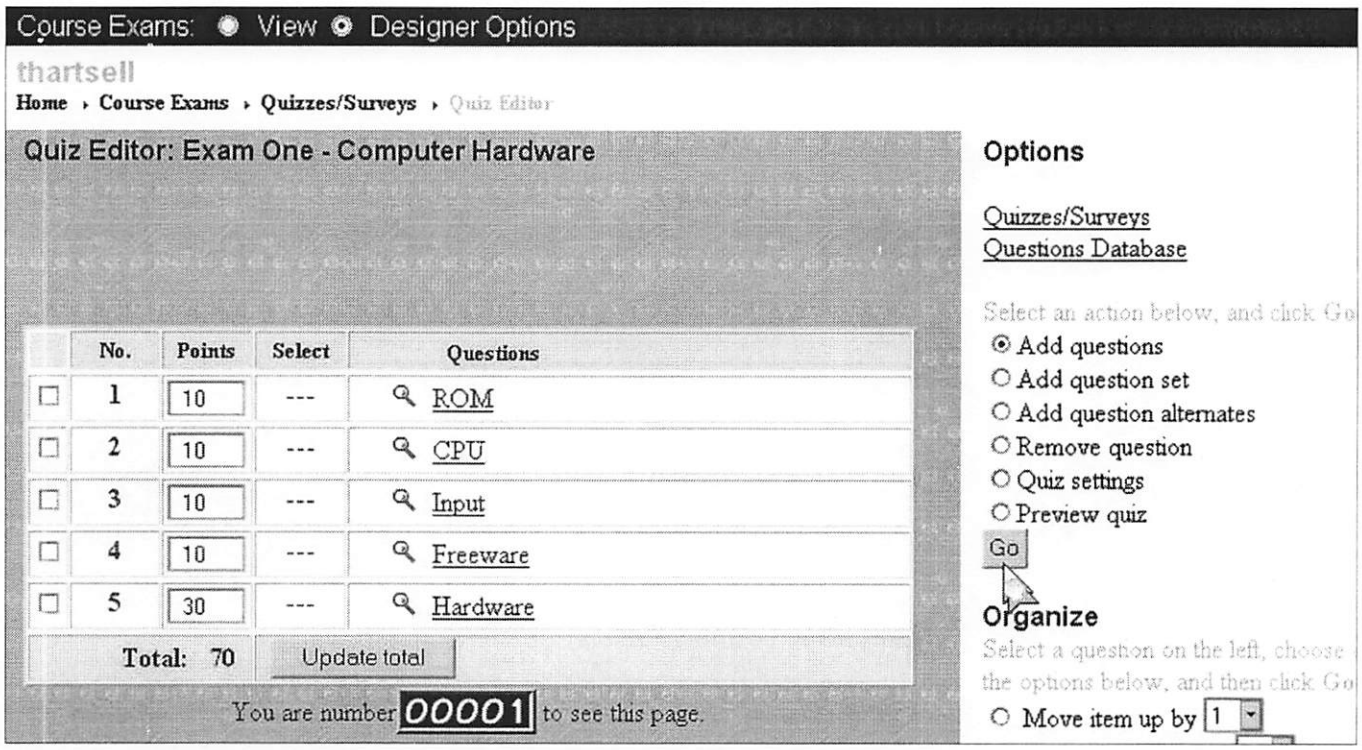
To preview your quiz/exam, go over to the Options area and select *Preview quiz*. Click on GO and you should see a preview of the quiz in which students will complete. You cannot take the exam yourself. Instructors are only allowed to preview the quizzes.

Adding Questions to Existing Quizzes

There may be a time in which you want to add questions to existing quizzes. To do this, first return to the **Course Exams** page (click on the breadcrumb trail link). Click on the Add option under the *Quiz Editor* area.



In the next window, click or select the quiz that you want to add questions to. Then, go over the *Options* area and click on the Add questions link and click on GO.



You can add questions from another database to the quiz. To do this, you just need to select the database, and then click on the question(s) you want to import. After performing these steps, choose the *Add questions to Quiz Name*. This will import the questions from another database into the current quiz you are editing (see graphic on following page).

Course Exams: View Designer Options

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Home › Course Exams › Quizzes/Surveys › Quiz Editor › Questions Database

Questions Database

To select a question, check the box to its left. To edit a question, click its title.

Category: Quiz One

	Title	Type	Category	Used by
	Sort	Sort	Sort	Sort
☐	ROM	MC	Quiz One	Exam One - Compu
☐	CPU	MC	Quiz One	Exam One - Compu
☐	Input	MC	Quiz One	Exam One - Computer Hardware, Quiz Two -
☐	Freeware	S	Quiz One	Exam One - Computer Hardware, Quiz Two - Word-pr
☐	Hardware	M	Quiz One	Exam One - Computer Hardware, Quiz Two - Word-pr

You can select another database to import questions

You can create a new question to be placed in the database

Options

Quizzes/Surveys
Quiz Editor

Manage Categories

Select an action below, and click Go.

- View category Quiz One
- Add category

Name:

- Delete category Quiz One

Go

Manage Questions

Select an action below, and click Go.

- Add questions to Exam One - Computer Hardware
- Add new question to database

Type: Multiple choice

- Edit question
- Delete questions
- Import questions from file
- Download questions
- Move questions to category

Quiz One

- Question statistics

Customizing Quizzes and Surveys

Finally, WebCT allows instructors to edit the appearance and functions of quizzes. There are several things that you, as an instructor, could perform in manipulating and/or adapting quizzes to suit your course's needs. If you are not there already, go to the *Quiz and Survey Management* page (click on Quizzes/Surveys in the breadcrumb trail). To the right side, you can see several options in which you can perform.

Course Exams: View Designer Options

thartsell

Home › Course Exams › Quizzes/Surveys

Quiz and Survey Management

Current date: Jun 16, 2003 17:45

Title	Availability	Duration	Points	Results
Exam One - Computer Hardware	Unavailable	Unlimited	/70	[Submissions] [Reports] [S
Quiz Two - Word-processing	Unavailable	Unlimited	/---	[Submissions] [Reports] [S

You are number 00003 to see this page.

Select an action below, and click Go.

- Add new quiz
- Add new survey
- Add label
- Edit
- Delete

Go

Organize Quizzes and Surveys

Select an item from the list on the left, select an action below, and click Go.

- Indent item More
- Move item up by 1
- Move item down by 1

Go

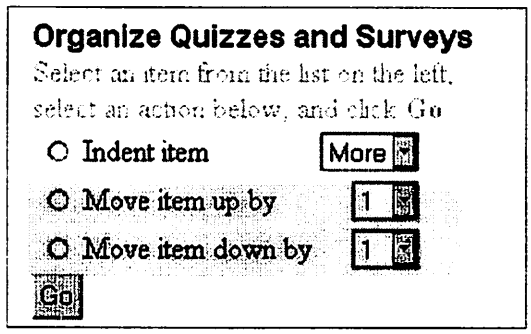
Customize

To change the look of your quiz page, select an item below and click Go.

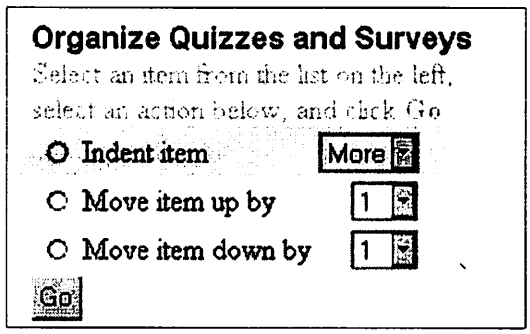
- Customize page colors
- Modify/Add background image
- Modify/Add banner image
- Modify/Add hit counter
- Edit/Add upper textblock
- Edit/Add lower textblock

Go

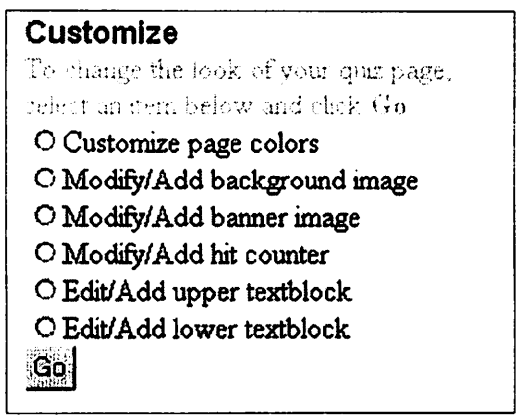
Under the *Organize Quizzes and Surveys* area, you can decide whether you want to rearrange the order of the quizzes. To do this, select the quiz or survey under the *Quiz and Survey Management* list, and then choose either *Move item up by* or *Move item down by*. You can decide upon how many levels you want to move the quiz/survey up or down by clicking on the down arrow button.



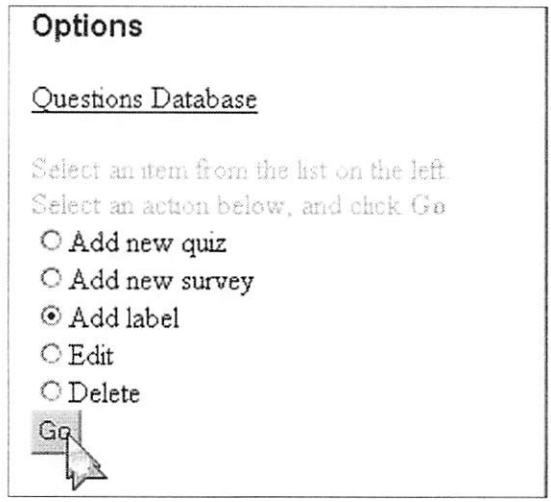
If you would like certain quizzes to be indented so that they would stand apart from others, use the *Indent item* option. You can choose either to indent more or less by clicking on the down arrow button.



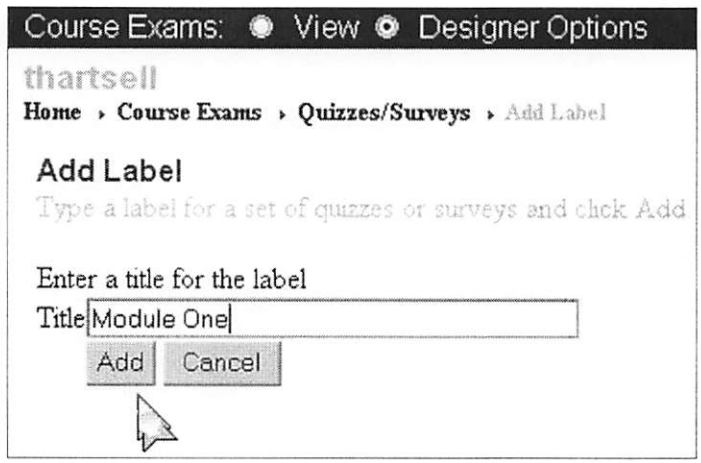
In addition, like some of the other pages in WebCT, you can adjust the appearance such as changing page colors, adding a background image, adding a hit counter, and even adding text blocks to the quiz page. This may be useful if you want to tell students some things about the quizzes they are about to take.



Another nice feature about adjusting the look of the *Quizzes/Surveys* page is by creating labels to organize a group of quizzes/surveys under. For instance, if there are five quizzes that students need to take for Module One, it may be better to chunk the five quizzes under one heading or label titled *Module One*. This would be a visual cue to students that they will need to take five quizzes within the first few weeks of the course. To create labels or headings, select *Add label* located under the *Options* area. Then, click on the GO button to proceed.

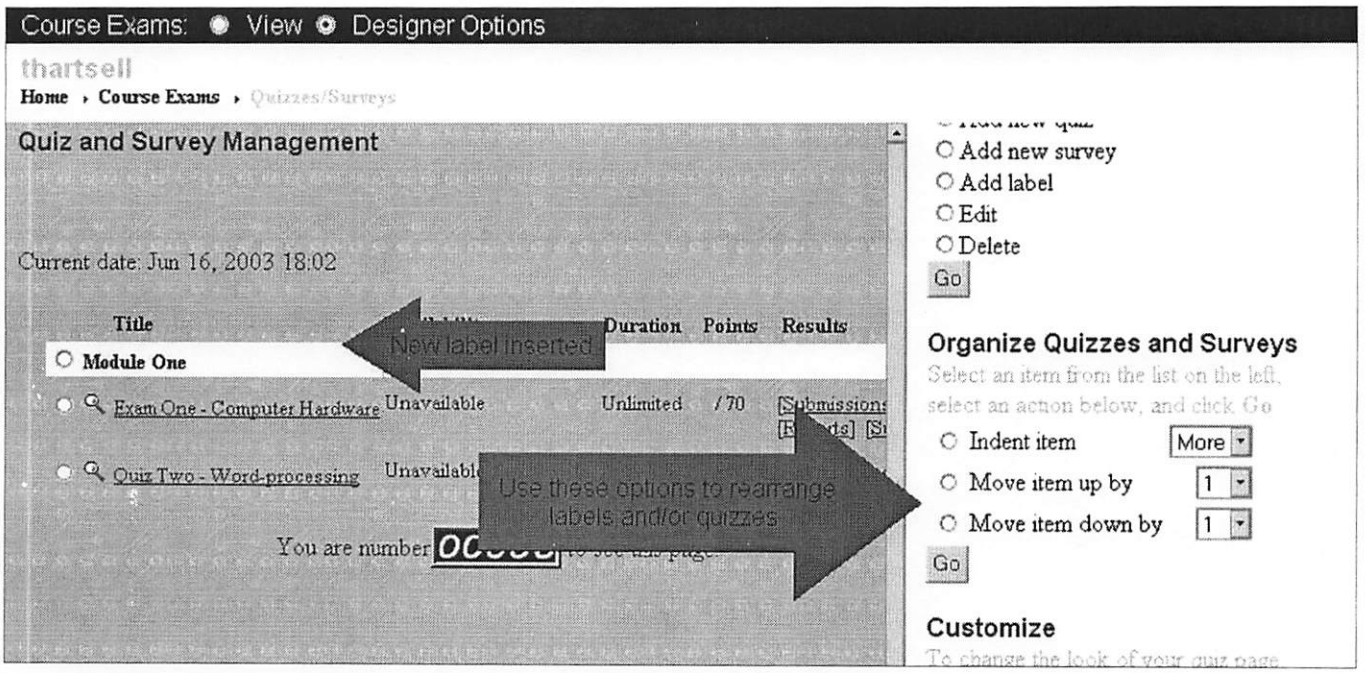


Type in the title for the new label and click the ADD button. You should then see the new label or heading under the *Quiz and Survey Management* page.



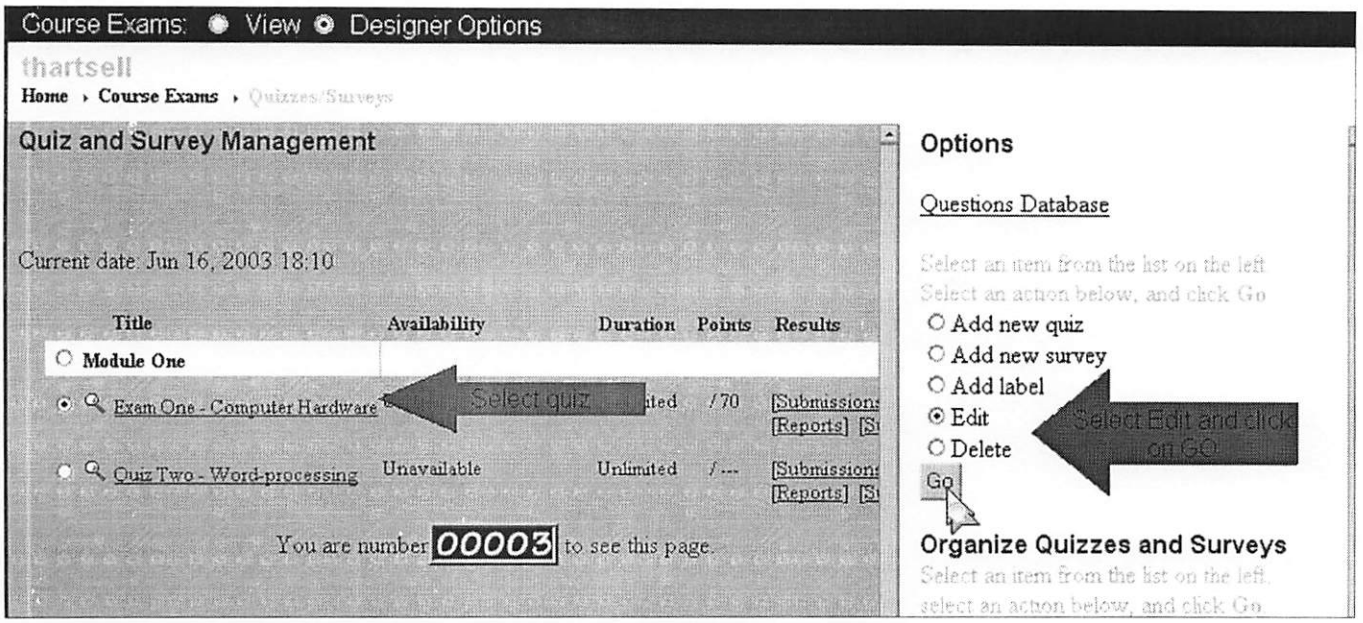
If you want to move the label around, use the options under the *Organize Quizzes and Surveys* area. The process is the same for moving individual quizzes around. If you need certain quizzes to follow a particular label, then you would need to select the quiz and use the *Move item up by* or *Move item down by* option.

The graphic below shows the options you would want to use to rearrange labels and/or the quizzes that follow particular labels.

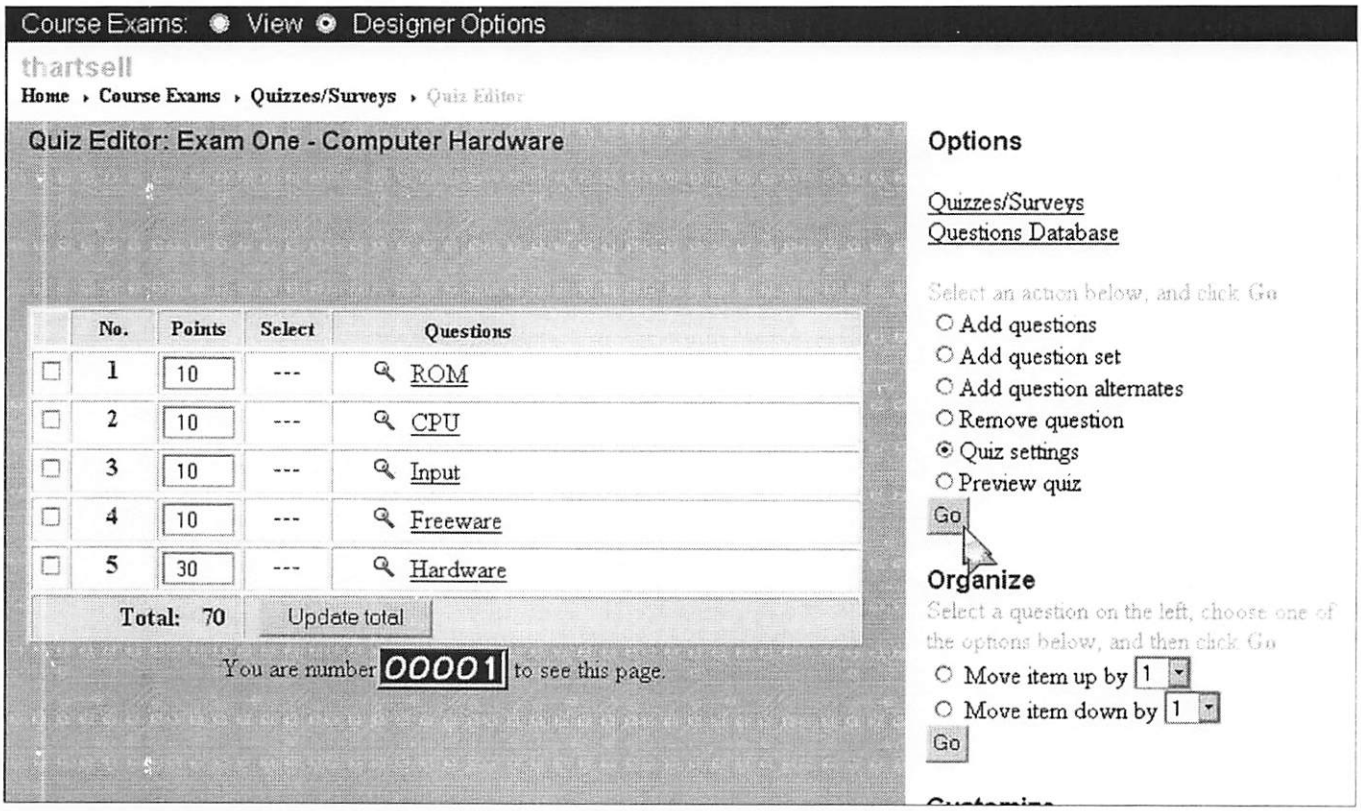


The last area in which you can adjust properties for quizzes is the *Quiz Settings* area. This area allows instructors to set release dates and times, provide scores to students, allow students multiple attempts, etc.

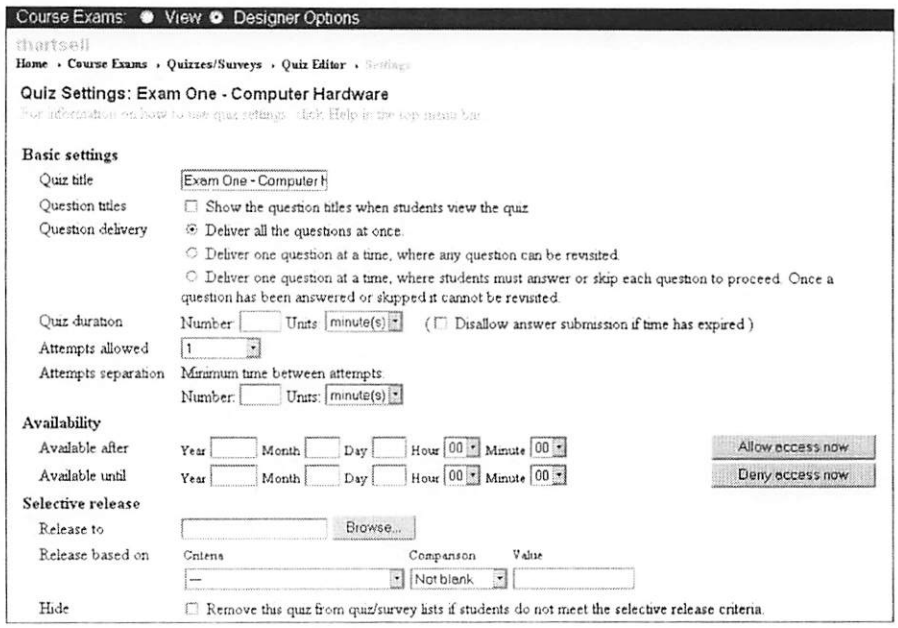
To get to that area, select a quiz you want to edit in the *Quiz and Survey Management* list and select *Edit* under the *Options* area. Click on the GO button to proceed.



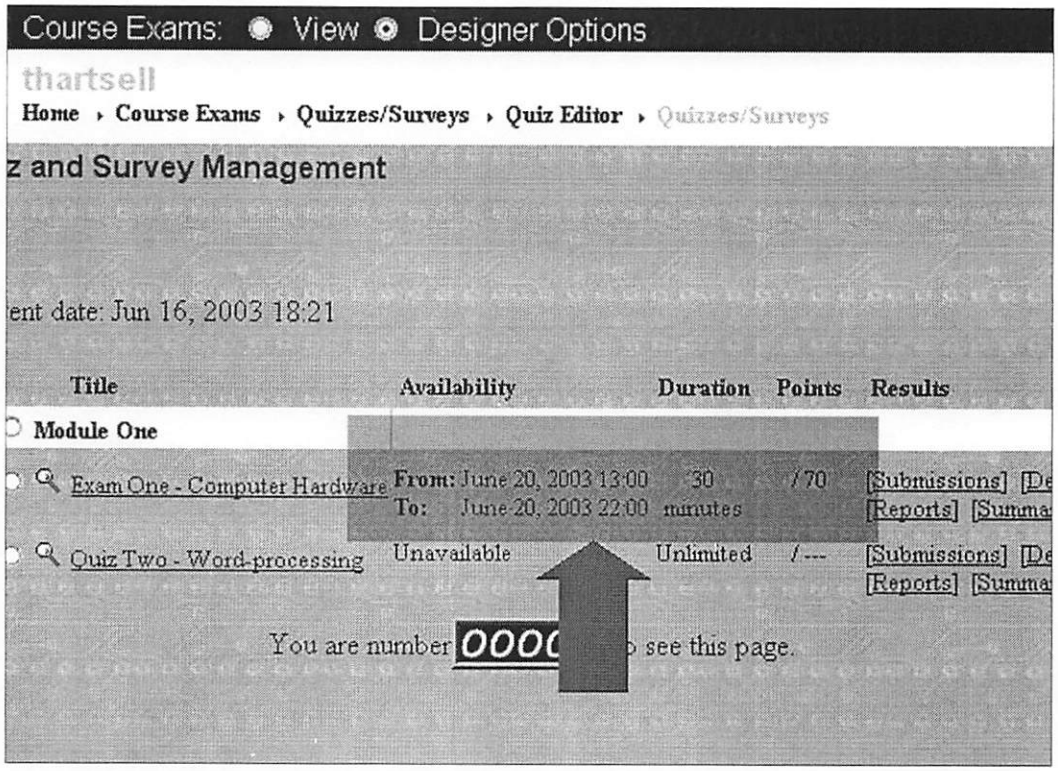
From there, select the *Quiz Settings* option under the *Options* area and click on GO.



You will have several options under this area that you can change as an instructor. Please read through these options and select what you need. They are quite self-explanatory. When you are through making the proper selections, click on the UPDATE button.



Return to the *Quiz and Survey Management* area (click on Quizzes/Surveys in the breadcrumb trail) to see the changes made to the quiz. The example below shows the release dates and times, including the time limit allotted to students for taking the quiz.



CONTENTS

- Adding Students
- Tracking Students
- Adjusting Columns in the Gradebook
- Course Backup

Course Management Tools

Once the WebCT course has been created (or in the process of being completed), several management tools are available to help instructors in maintaining records and making course backups in case the server holding the course fails. WebCT has six areas in the Course Management area that can help instructors administer their courses: 1) manage students, 2) track students, 3) manage presentation groups, 4) manage teaching assistants, 5) track pages, and 6) course functions. In this tutorial handout, only four areas will be discussed in further detail such managing students enrolled in the course, tracking students and pages viewed, modifying data and columns, and creating course backups.

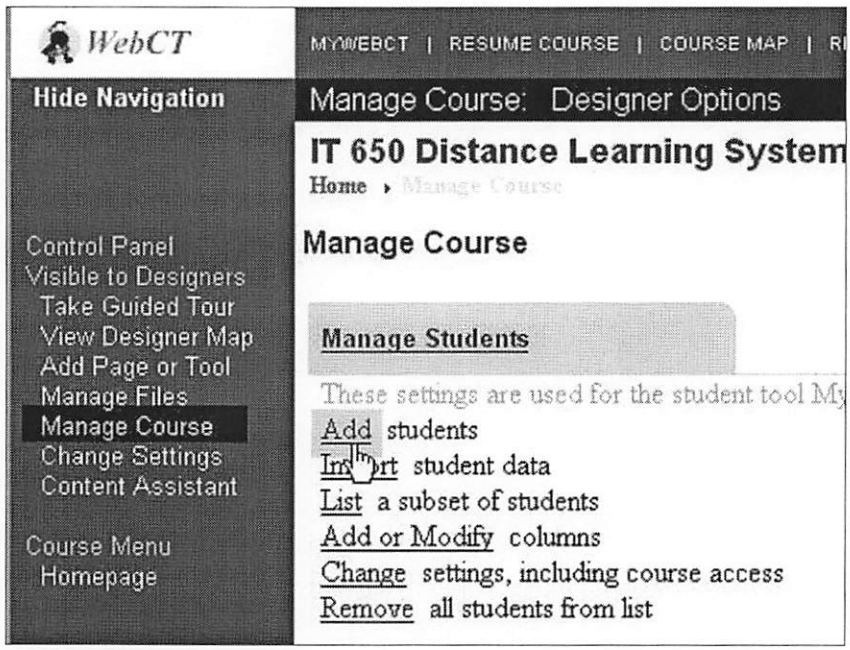
Adding Students to the Course

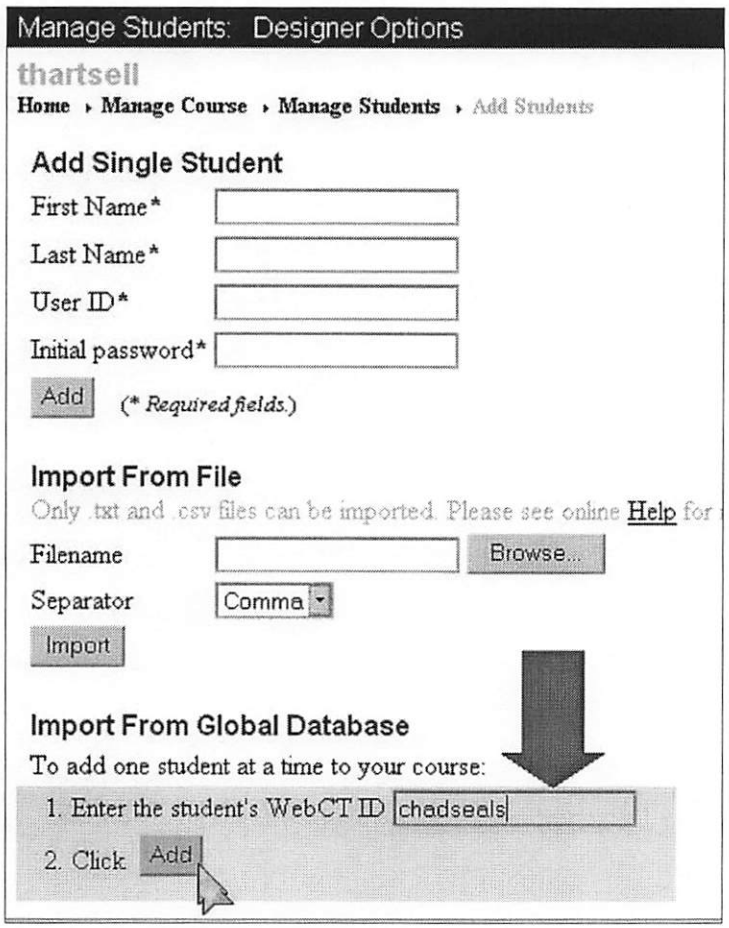
As an instructor, you will be adding students to your WebCT course. The students will be your colleagues in this class. I have divided everyone into two groups. So, please look at the group you are in and **add only those students who are in your group**. Unless there is someone else in the course who would like to see your course, then you can add them later. But for now, only add the students in your group. This will prevent everyone in class from having **thirteen** additional WebCT accounts besides IT 650, their own development sites, and any other online courses they may be taking during this term.

Group A	Group B
Antoinette Go (tonettego)	Veronica Boykin (vboykin1)
Steve Ellis (steveellis)	Sherry Josey (sjosey)
Tameka Robinson (389217)	Randall Skolnik (155255)
Randy Purdum (132198)	JoAnn Proctor (Joani1)
Jennifer Powell (jhpowell)	David Freeman (dfreeman)
David Brockway (djbrockway)	Chad Seals (chadseals)
Larry Sparkman (larrysparkman)	

Please note the login names beside your group members' names. This is the information you will need to add your colleagues to your WebCT course. If any of these login names are incorrect, please let your colleagues know so that they can locate you within the Global Database.

To add your colleagues to your course as students, please follow the given steps. First, click on **Manage Course** in the side navigation frame. Under the **Manage Course** page, go to the *Manage Students* area and click on the *Add students* link.

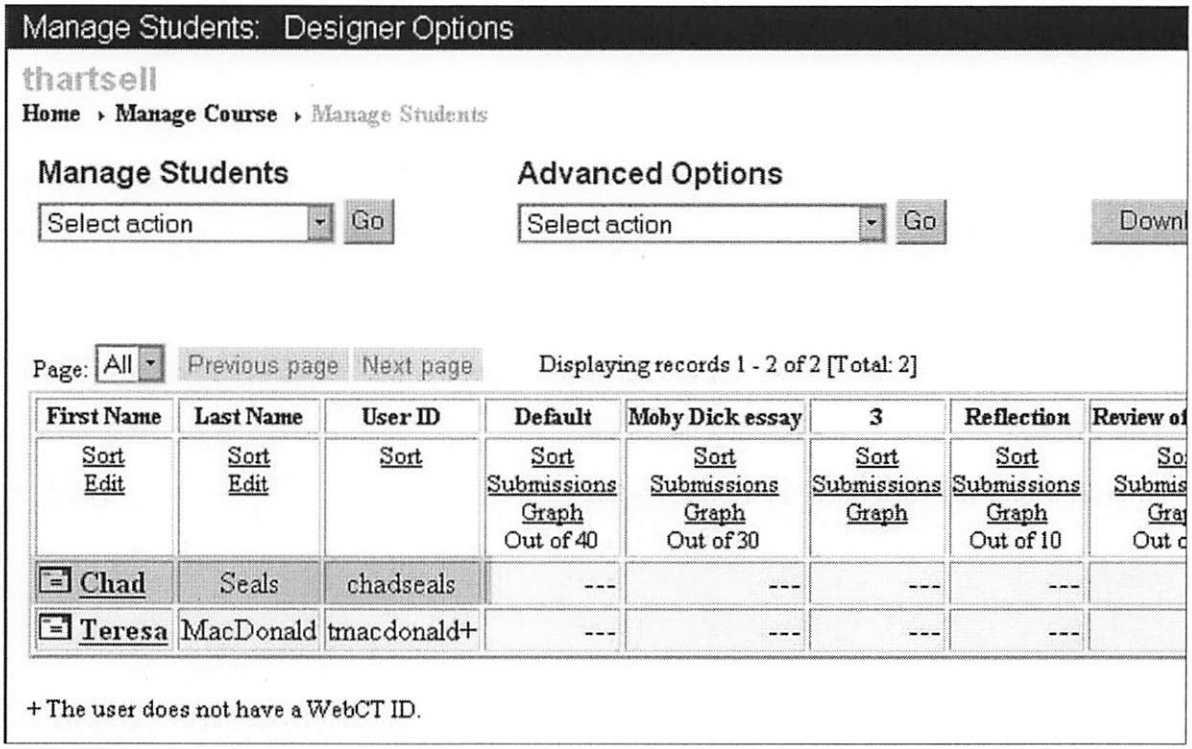


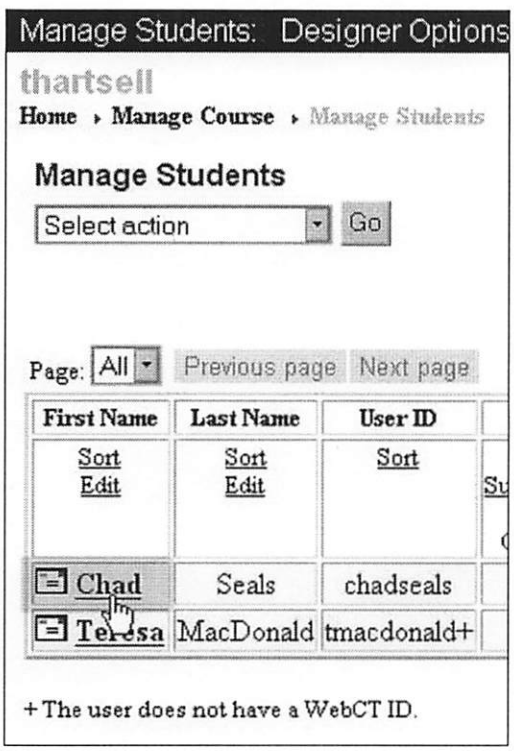


In the *Add Single Student* page, scroll toward the bottom until you reach *Import from Global Database.* Type in the login information of those students in your group in the dialog box. Click the ADD button to add your colleagues to your course.

NOTE: You will need to repeat these steps for every student you add.

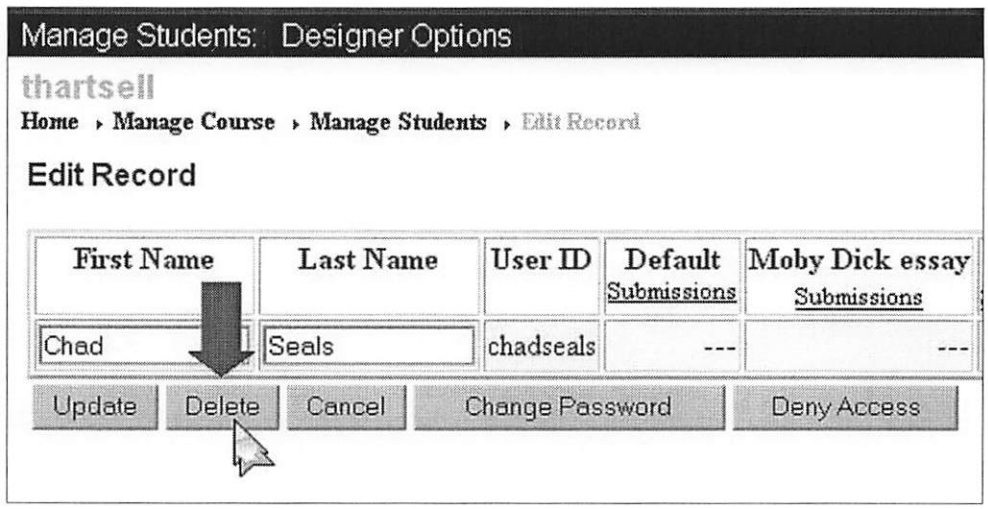
After you add a student, you should be taken to the *Manage Students* page. The student's name should now be showing.



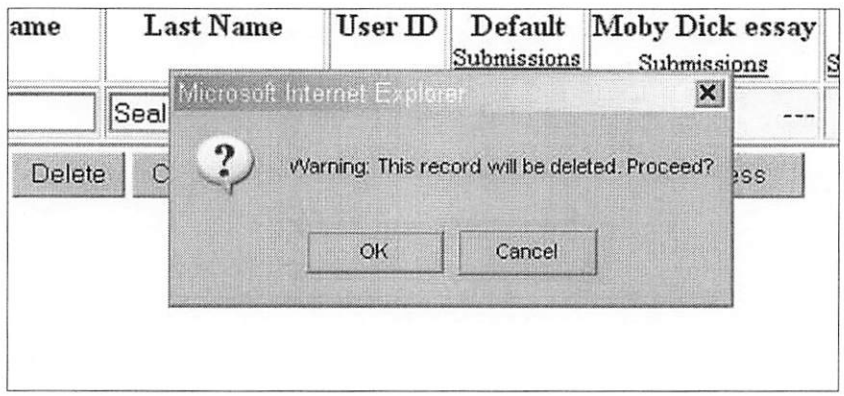


To remove a student from your course, go to the *Manage Students* page. There, click on the linked student's name (e.g., Chad) and you will be taken to another window.

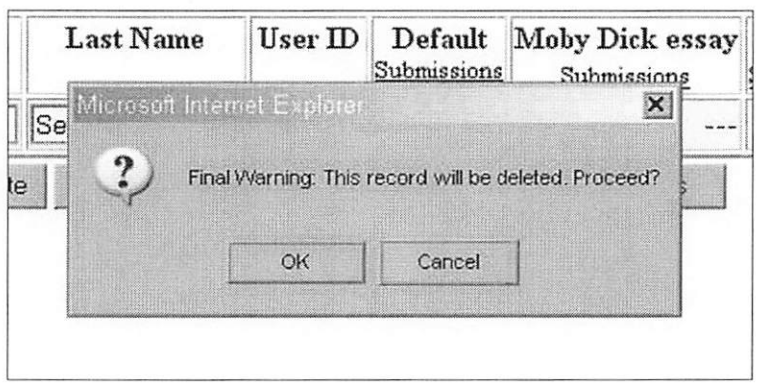
In this window, click on the DELETE button to remove the student from the class.



You will see a warning message to confirm deletion or removal of the student like the one shown below. Click on the OK button to confirm.



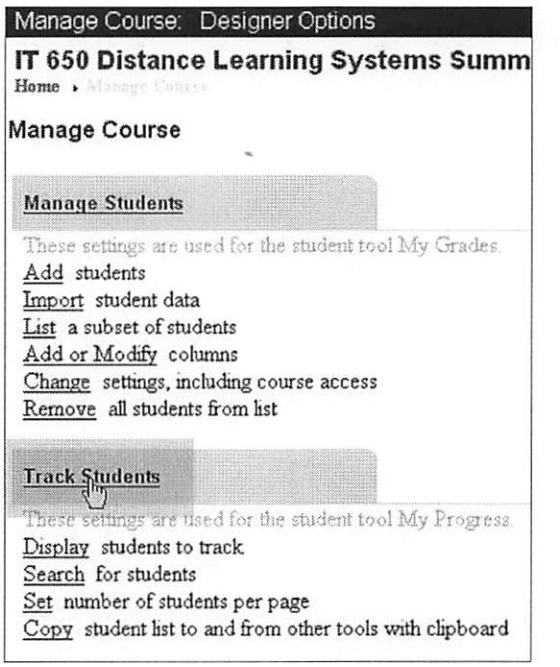
A second warning message will appear asking for verification. The reason why WebCT is cautious about this matter is because once a student is removed, all of his/her records is also deleted and cannot be retrieved. That is why WebCT wants a second confirmation in the removal of students.



Tracking Students in WebCT

In WebCT, the instructor can track students by seeing when they logged on, what pages they visited, how many postings they made to the discussion threads, etc. This can be a useful tool when you have a student who says that he/she came to the site repeatedly but still could not understand the material/assignment, and that is why he/she performed poorly. As an instructor you really can see how thorough students have been in the course.

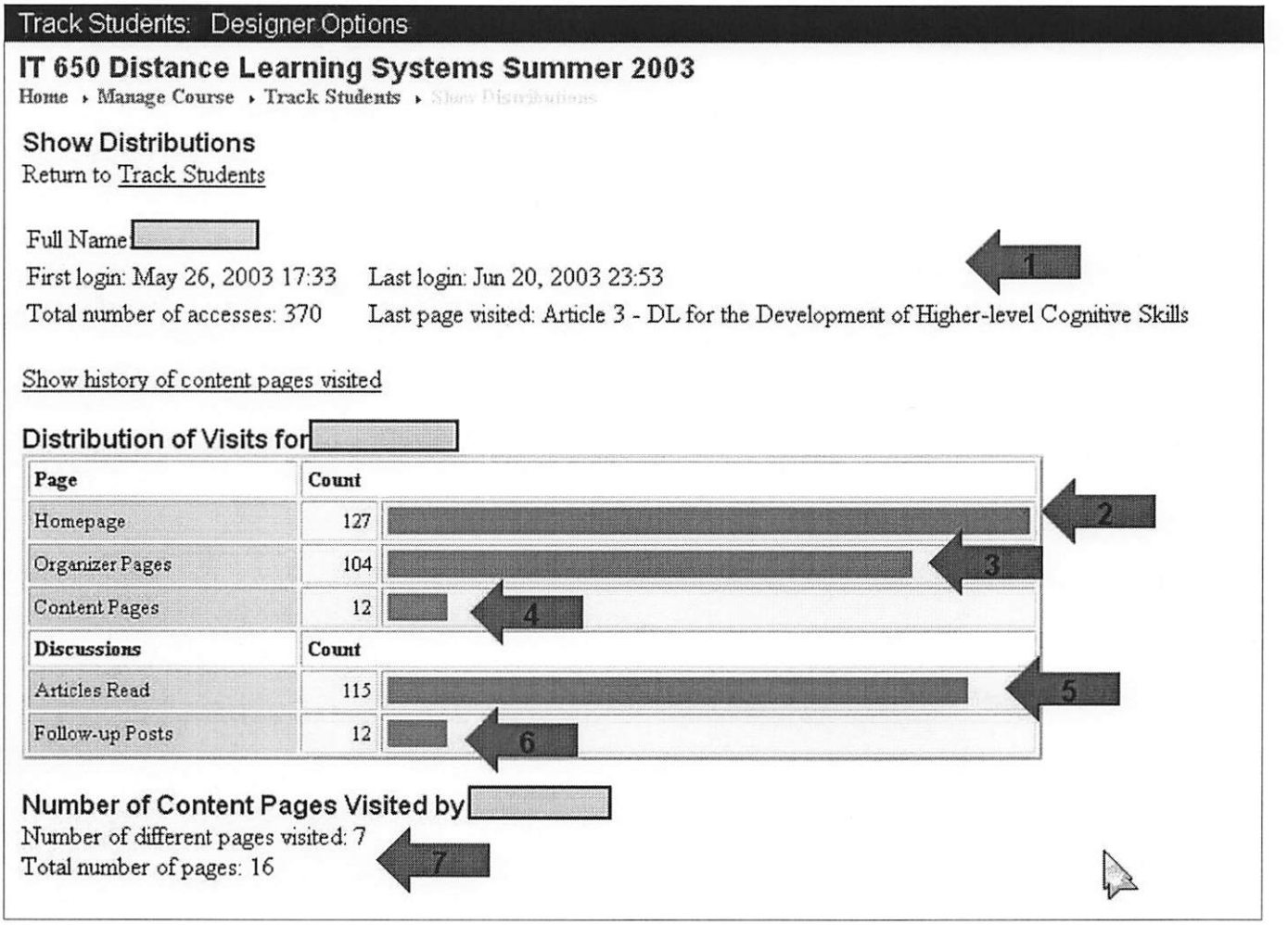
To track your students, go to the **Manage Course** page (click on the link in the side navigation frame). There, click on *Track Students*.



Access Information			Articles	
First Access	Last Access	Hits	Items Read	Posted
Sort	Sort	Sort	Sort	Sort
May 26, 2003 10:33	Jun 20, 2003 23:30	189	86	8
May 27, 2003 09:07	Jun 20, 2003 14:02	263	176	14
May 28, 2003 19:37	Jun 18, 2003 19:58	91	40	10
Jun 01, 2003 05:22	Jun 21, 2003 08:48	257	140	9
May 27, 2003 11:17	Jun 20, 2003 15:12	309	164	19
May 27, 2003 16:11	Jun 20, 2003 13:51	378	175	12
---	---	0	0	0
May 29, 2003 10:36	Jun 18, 2003 21:26	161	87	6
May 29, 2003 12:39	Jun 17, 2003 14:23	101	20	12
Jun 11, 2003 18:15	Jun 19, 2003 19:17	165	42	9
May 28, 2003 12:03	Jun 20, 2003 18:07	243	131	25
May 26, 2003 17:33	Jun 20, 2003 23:53	370	115	12
May 28, 2003 13:21	Jun 20, 2003 10:44	201	171	11
May 26, 2003 10:55	Jun 20, 2003 21:44	278	159	15

You will then arrive to another page called *Track Students*. You should see all of the students that have been added to your course. In addition, you can see the times that the students first accessed and last accessed the course. In addition, you can tell how many different pages they hit in your course. Finally, you can quickly view how many items they read in the discussions and the number of messages they posted to the discussion threads.

If you want an even a more detailed account of the students' participation, click on the individual names. This will take you to the tracking information of the individual student.



The items shown in the graphic above are explained further below according to their numbers.

1. **Login information.** This area shows the student's first and last logins, the total number of pages visited, and the last page visited.
2. **Homepage.** Depending upon the course that has been set up, the Homepage may or may not be shown. But, this area tells instructors how many times the student has arrived to the Homepage.
3. **Organizer pages.** This is the area in which the pages are set up as organizer pages. For instance, in this course IT 650, the two organizer pages are the Course Materials and Communication Tools.
4. **Content pages.** This area gives the number of times that a student has accessed content pages. In IT 650, the content pages are the Lesson Materials and WebCT Tutorials.
5. **Discussions-Articles read.** This area tells the instructor the number of times that a student has read or looked through a discussion posting.
6. **Discussions-Follow-up posts.** The number given here tells the instructor how many follow-up postings the student has made in response to a question. Sometimes, a student may have initiated rather than posted a follow-up on what was said. In this case, another area will appear giving the number of original posts made.

7. **Number of content pages visited.** This area shows more of the distribution in which a student has visited different content pages.

An instructor can also see the history of content pages visited by clicking on the Show history of content pages visited link. The *Show History* screen will appear and the instructor can see the pages that the student has visited, starting with the page most recently accessed. To return to the previous screen, click on the Show distribution of hits link.

Track Students: Designer Options

IT 650 Distance Learning Systems Summer 2003

Home › Manage Course › Track Students › Show History

Show History

Return to Track Students

Full Name:

First login: May 26, 2003 17:33 Last login: Jun 20, 2003 23:53

Total number of accesses: 370 Last page visited: Article 3 - DL for the Development of Higher-level Cognitive Skills

Show distribution of hits

History of Content Pages Visited by

Previous 10 Visits Next 10 Visits

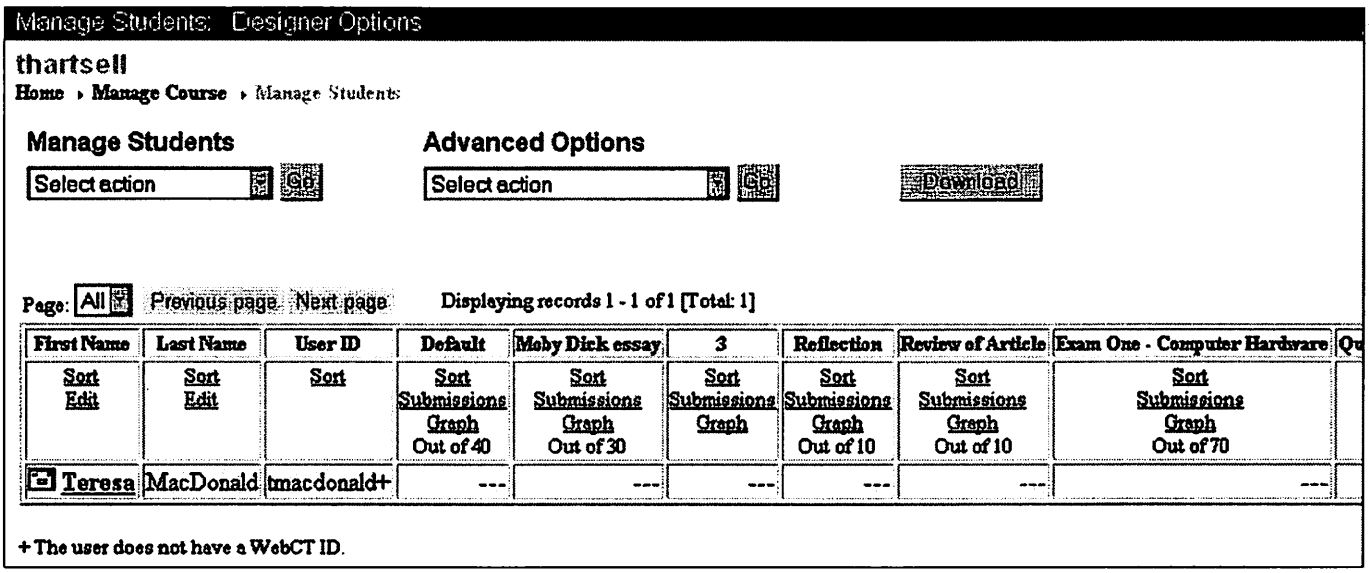
	Page Name	Time of Access
12		Jun 20, 2003 23:45
11		Jun 16, 2003 13:17
10	Week Three Reading - Avoiding E-class Suits	Jun 13, 2003 11:00
9		Jun 12, 2003 10:16
8	Web-based Education Commission Report	Jun 06, 2003 10:01
7		Jun 04, 2003 11:47
6		Jun 03, 2003 12:00
5		Jun 02, 2003 23:05
4		May 30, 2003 12:53
3		May 28, 2003 23:51

Making Adjustments to the Gradebook

Assignments that have been submitted/graded and exams that students have taken are all recorded in the electronic gradebook. This provides instructors with easy access to student performance in WebCT. Although it is recommended that instructors keep another gradebook (whether electronic or on paper), the electronic gradebook in WebCT can be helpful in keeping track of student performance because of convenience and easy access.

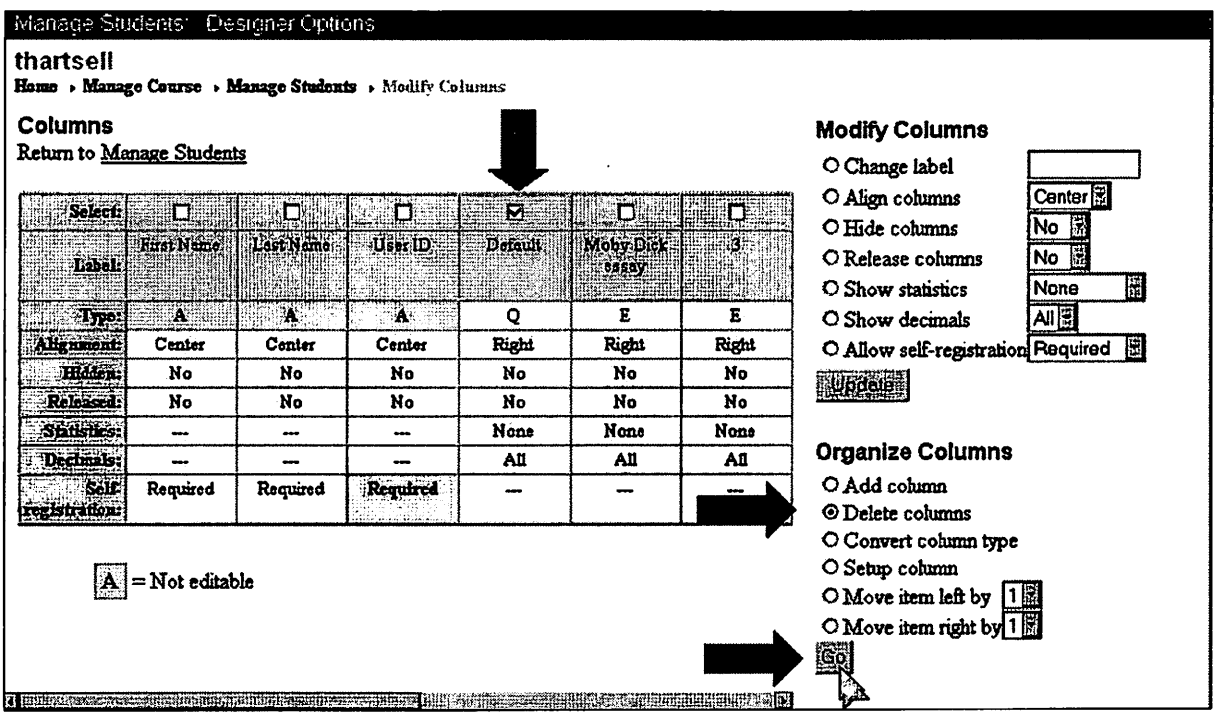
To access the electronic gradebook, go to the *Manage Students* area by clicking on that link. You will then arrive to the list of students enrolled in the course with several columns to the right.

In the graphic below, you may notice that there are several assignment/quiz columns that have been left from the default settings of the course (e.g., Moby Dick Essay, Default, 3). Your *Manage Students* list may also have these extra columns in addition to the assignments that you added. So, we will need to do some modification to the columns.

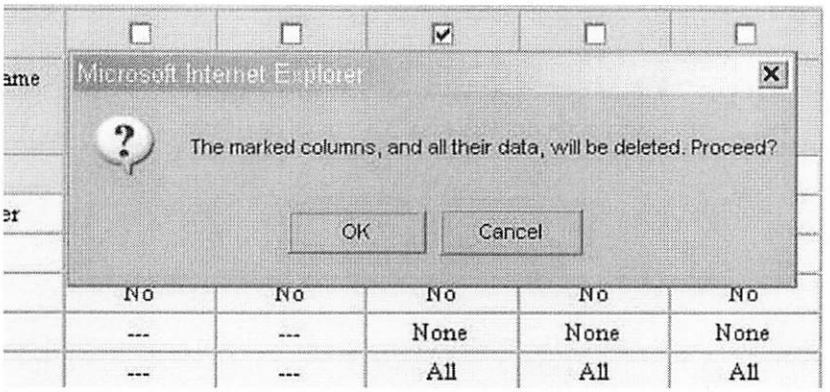


To delete the columns that have extraneous assignments, go to *Advanced Options* and select the *Modify Columns* option and click on GO. You will now see a page that has several options available to the right, with the columns located on the left.

To delete a column, click on the square box above the column's title, click on the *Delete Columns* option under the *Organize Columns* area, and click on the GO button.

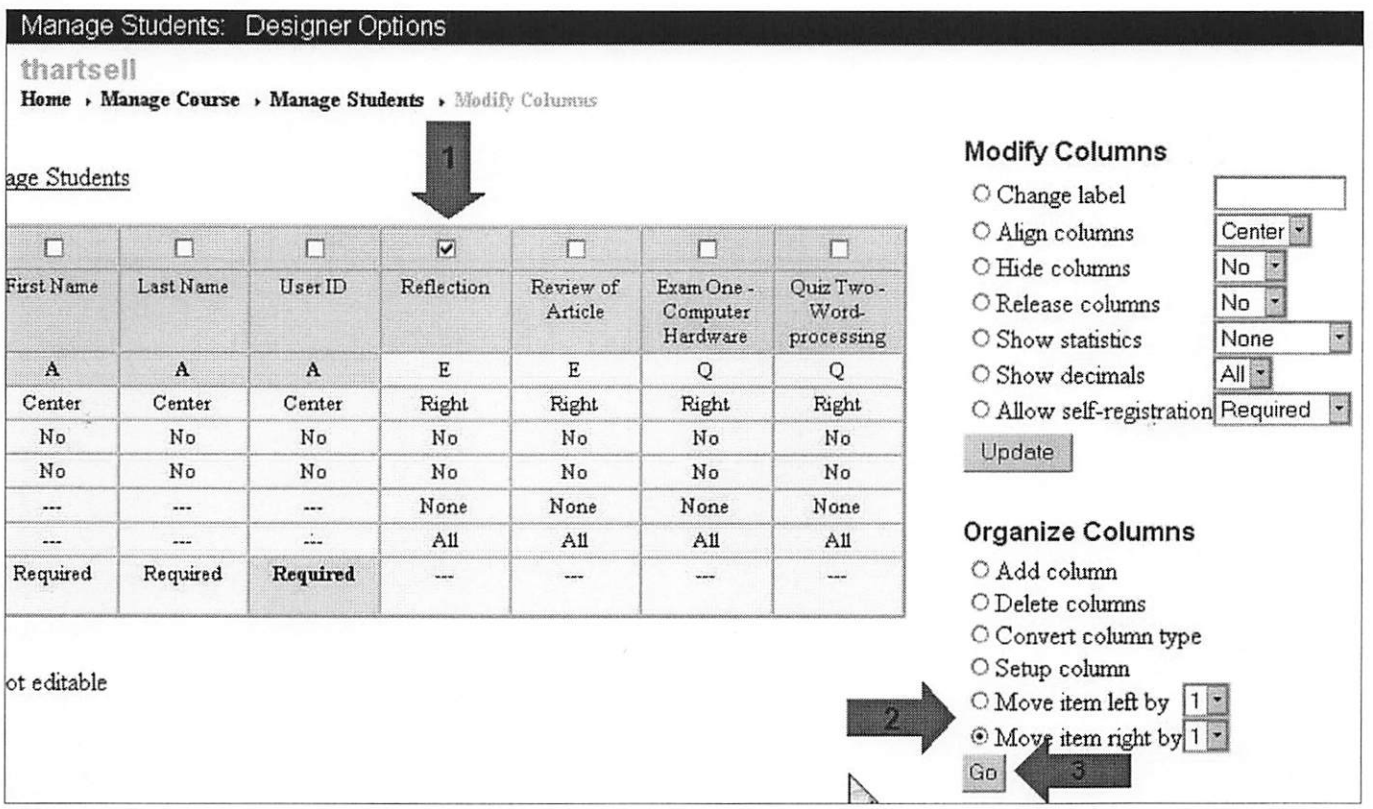


You will receive a warning message asking for verification of deletion. Click OK if you want to continue.

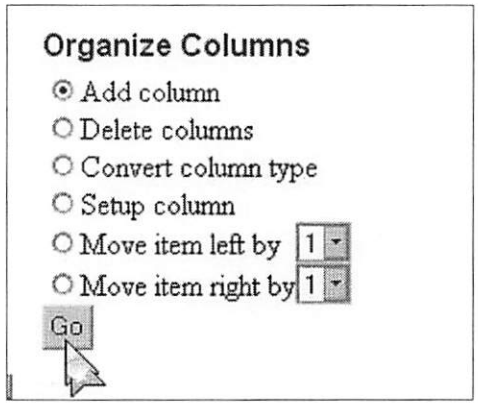


The assignment column should no longer appear in the table. If it is still there, repeat the steps until you no longer see the assignment. Repeat this process for all other assignments that do not belong there.

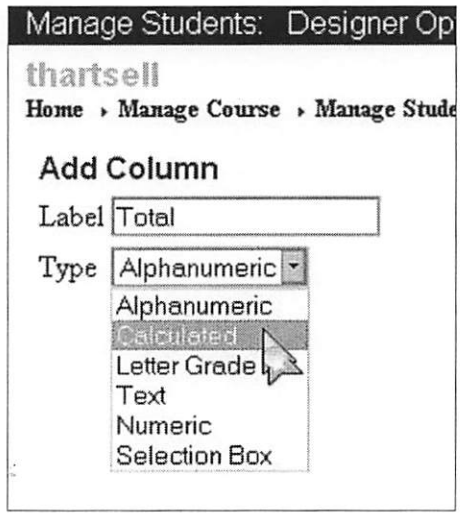
If you want to rearrange the order of the assignment columns, then click on the square box above the column's title and use the *Move item left by* or *Move item right by* option. These options will help you rearrange the order of the assignment/quiz columns.



In case your gradebook does not have a calculated total column, you need to create one so that all of the scores will be tabulated for each student. To add a column, go to the *Organize Columns* area and select the *Add column* option. Then, click on GO to proceed.

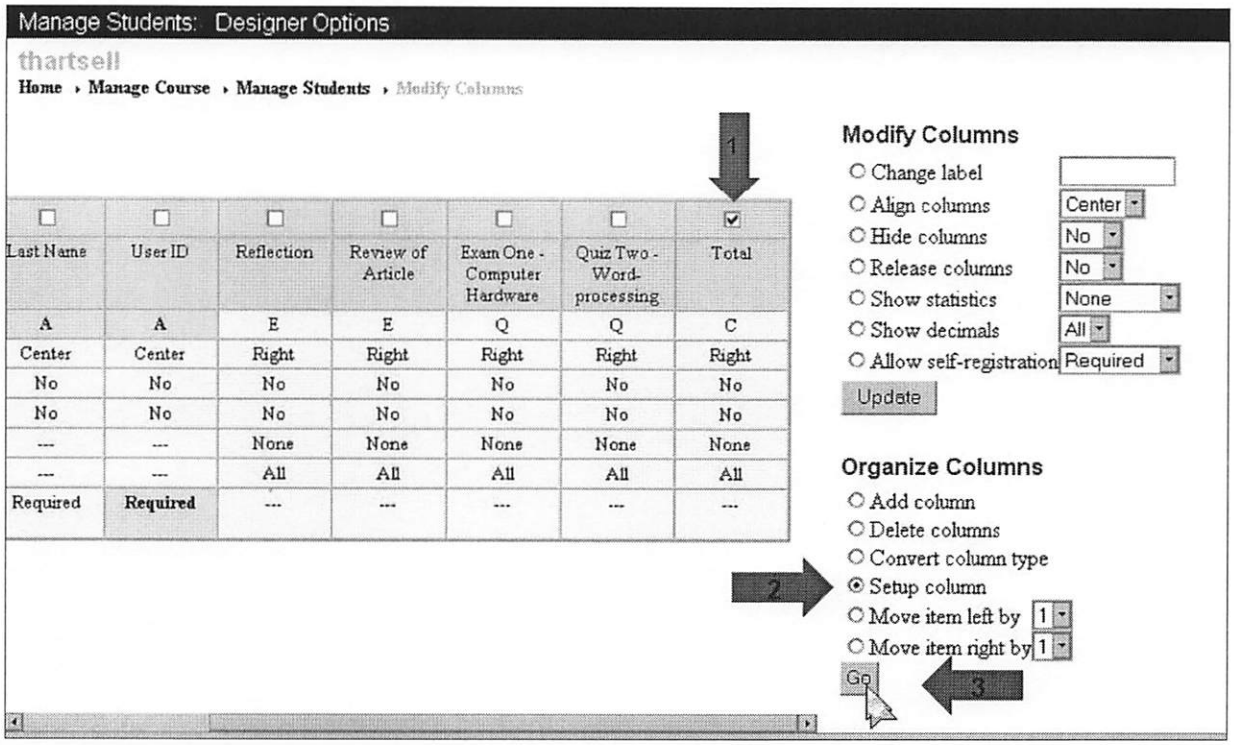


In the next window, type in a title of the new column and select the type *Calculated* (we want to create a formula that will add all the scores). Please note the other types of columns you can also create down the line. Click the ADD button to finalize.

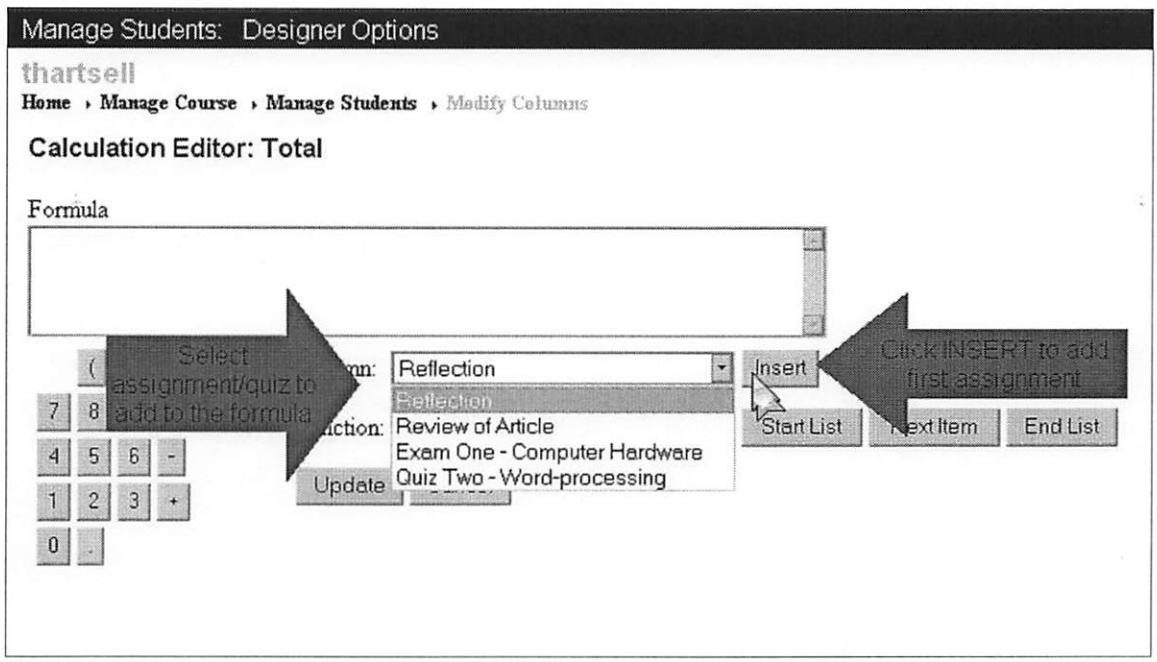


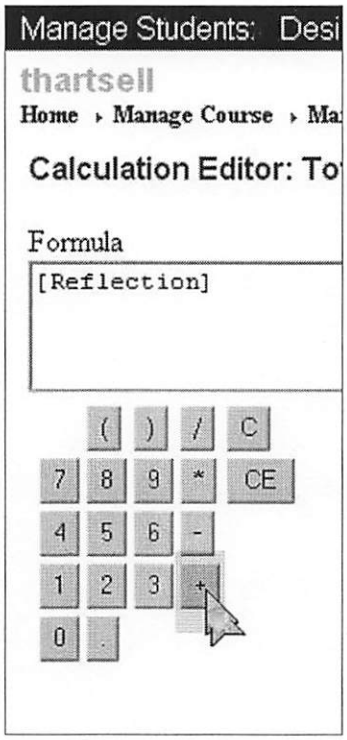
Your new total column should now appear in the table. If the *Total* column is not in the last column, use the *Move item right by* or *Move item left by* option to make *Total* the last column in the table.

Because the *Total* column is supposed to calculate all of the scores, we need to set up the *Total* column to tabulate the scores. Right now, the column is inactive until we insert a mathematical equation (formula) into the column. To do this, click on the square above the column's title. Then, select the *Setup Column* option under *Organize Columns*. Click the GO button to finalize (see graphic on following page).



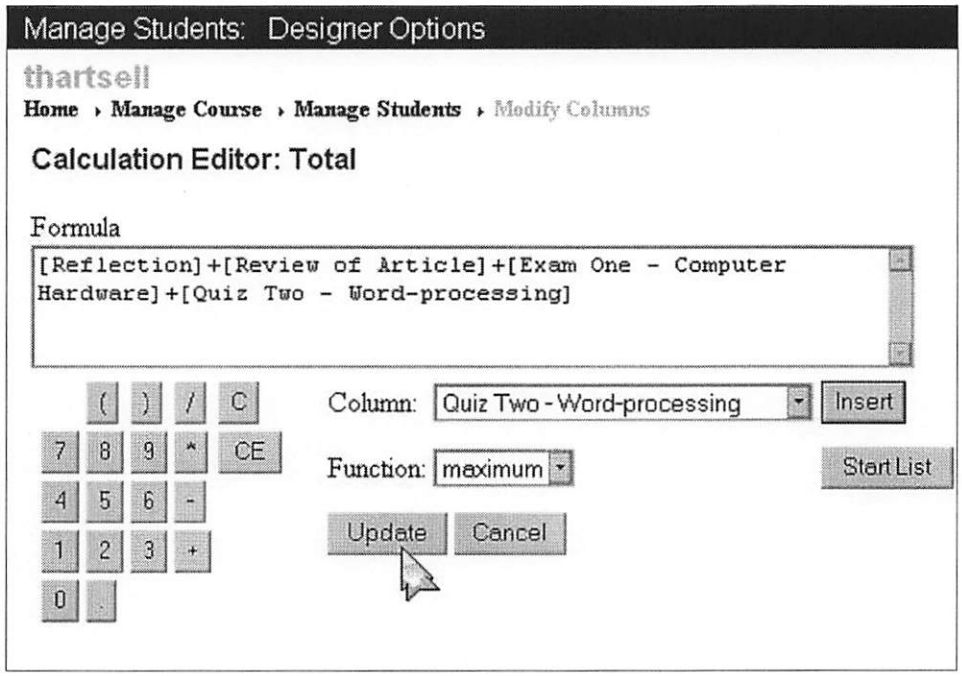
Select the first assignment or quiz to add to the formula and click on the INSERT button.

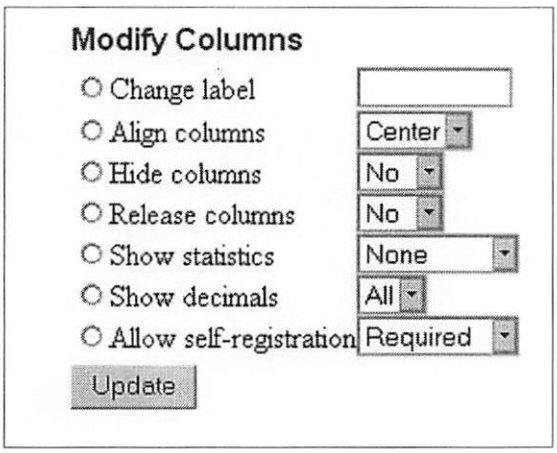




Then, click on the plus sign to add the first assignment/quiz with the second. When you click on the plus sign, you should see the plus sign appear in the Formula area. Now, keep adding the other assignments and quizzes by inserting the plus sign in between the variables.

Eventually, your formula will include all of the assignments and tests in the course like the graphic below. Clicking on the UPDATE button will finalize the process and the Total column will now add all of the scores in the course.



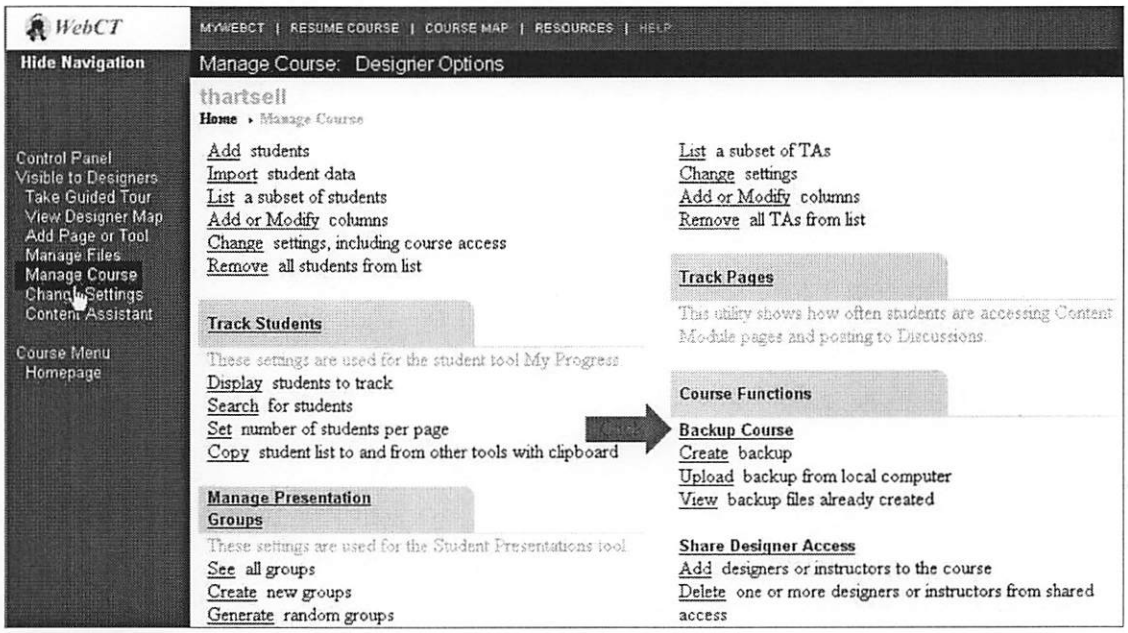


The options under *Modify Columns*, allow instructors to make even more adjustments to the columns. These options include changing the title, aligning information within a column, hiding certain columns from student view, releasing columns for student view as in *My Grades*, providing statistics such as the minimum, maximum, and average, determining decimal places, and allowing self-registration of students.

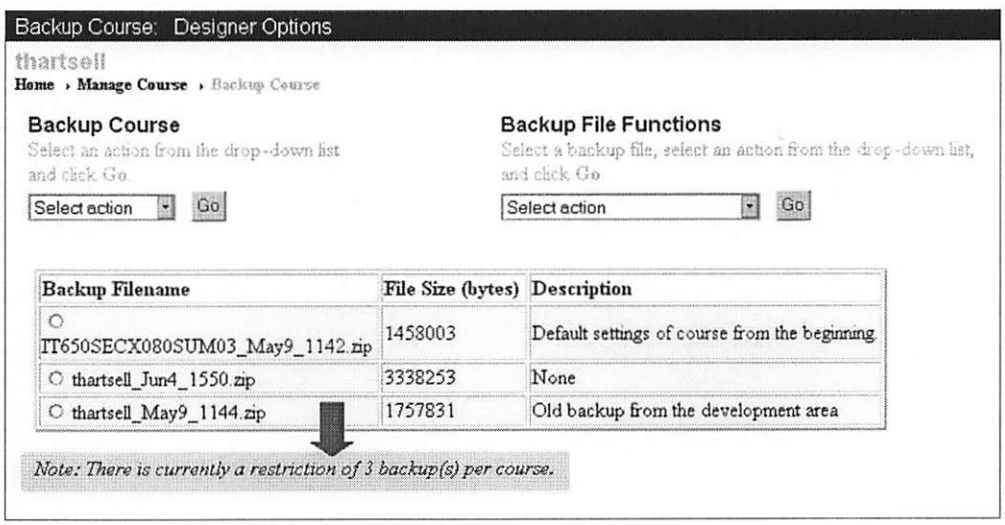
Course Backup

Just like backing up folders and files on the hard drive of a computer, instructors can also backup different versions of the course during course creation and development. The WebCT course can be saved during any stage of development or when the course is actually being offered. After creating a backup, it is recommended that you download the backup to the computer for safekeeping. For instance, if you do not like the changes made during development or if the server fails, the course backup file can be uploaded and restored to WebCT at a later date.

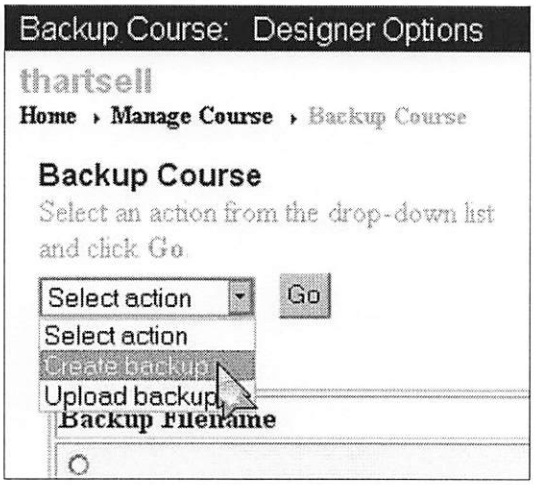
Creating a course backup is simple and only requires a few steps. To get to the Course Backup page, click on Manage Course in the side navigation frame. On the **Manage Course** page, click on the hyperlinked title *Backup Course*.



When the Backup Course link is clicked, you will be taken to another page called *Backup Course*. You will see several options such Backup actions, Backup File Functions, and any previous course backups that you may have made (e.g., I made three backups to this course seen in the Backup Filename area).



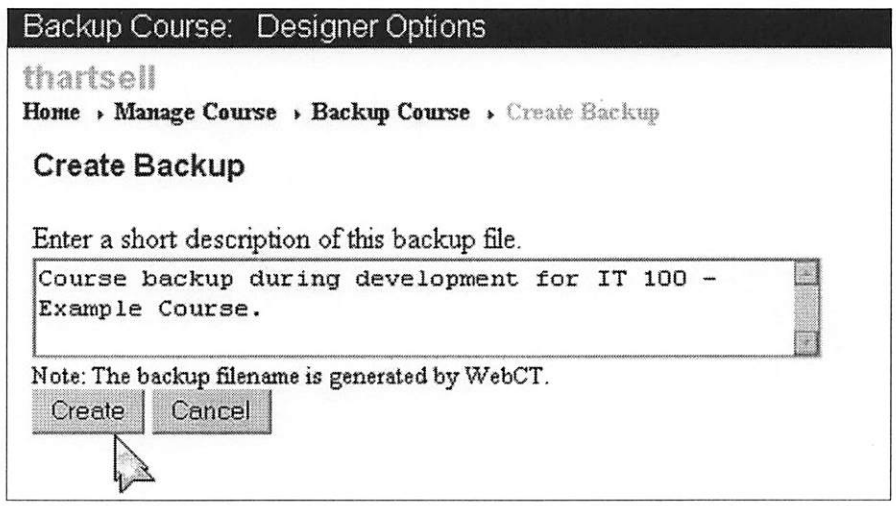
NOTE: You can make only **three** backups at a time. Therefore, if you are making a fourth backup, you will have to delete a file.

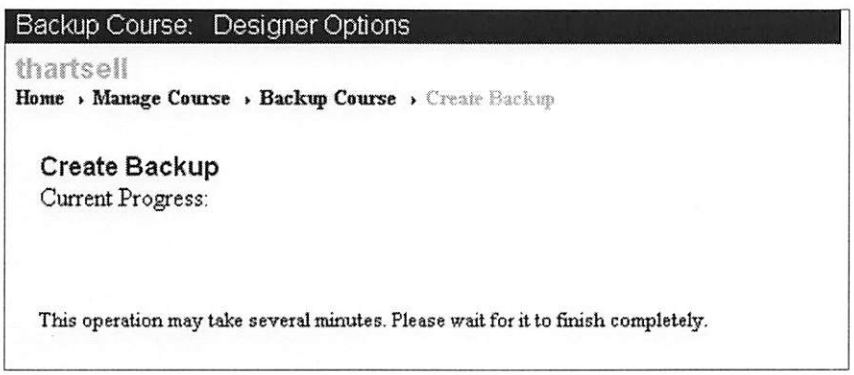


To create a new course backup, click on the down arrow under *Course Backup* to bring up some options. Click or highlight the option *Create Backup* and click on the GO button.

In the *Create Backup* window, type a short description of the backup file in the dialog box. This description is not necessary, but it may prove helpful later down the line.

Click on the CREATE button to begin the backup cycle.





While the course is being saved into a backup file, you will see a message like the one to the left stating that it may take several minutes to create the backup file.

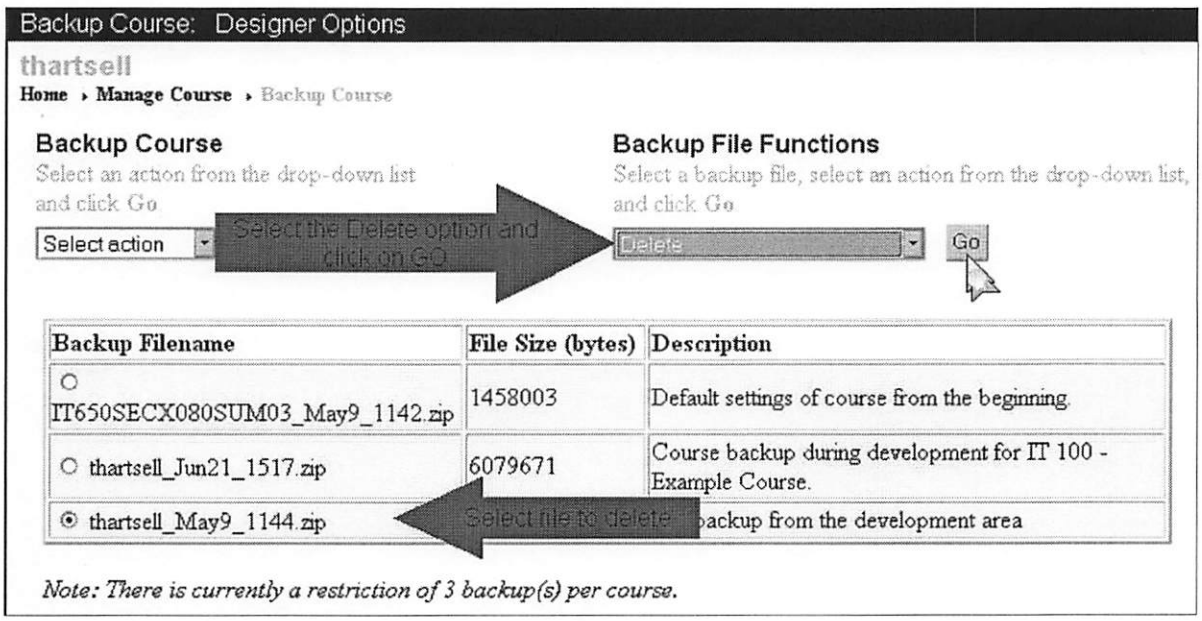
Once the course has been saved to a backup file, you will see a message like the one shown to the right.

Click on the CONTINUE button to proceed.

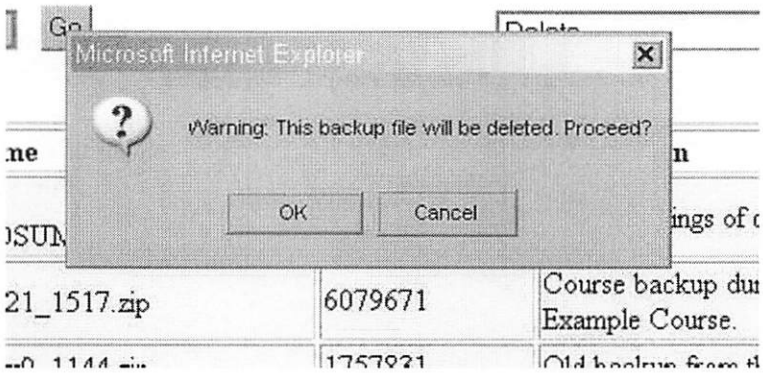
Now, you should see the name of the backup file. WebCT assigns a filename for the backup. Therefore, typing in a description can be helpful in determining which backup file has the correct information.

Backup Filename	File Size (bytes)	Description
○ IT650SECX080SUM03_May9_1142.zip	1458003	Default settings of course from the beginning.
○ thartsell_Jun21_1517.zip	6079671	Course backup during development for IT 100 - Example Course.
○ thartsell_May9_1144.zip	1757831	Old backup from the development area

To delete a backup file, select the file you want deleted by clicking on the radio button first. Then, select the *Delete* option under the *Backup File Functions* area. Click on the GO button to proceed.



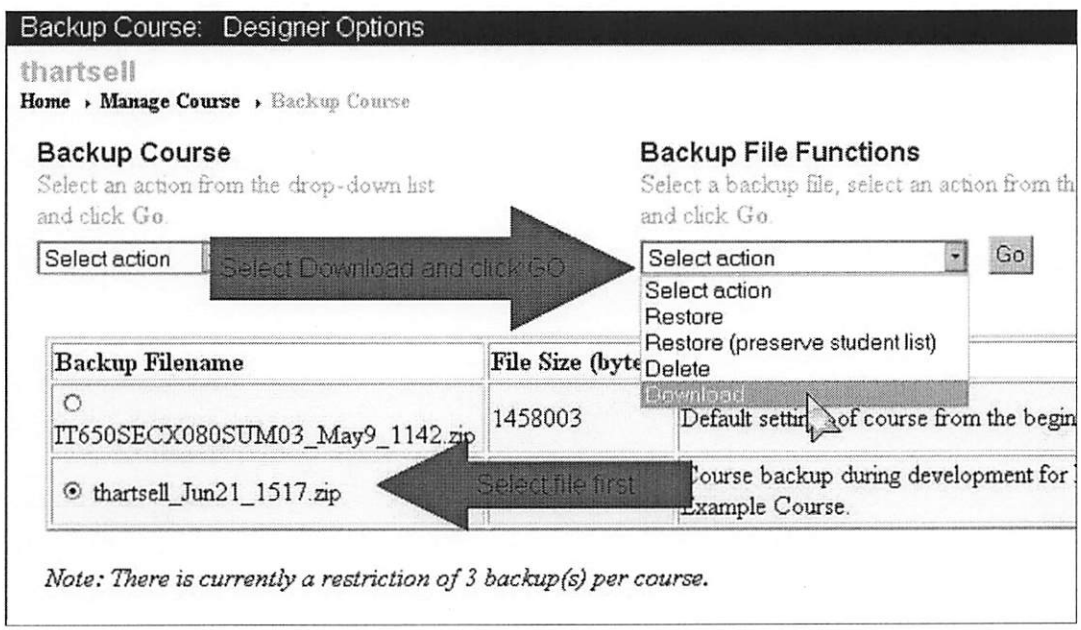
A warning message will appear asking for confirmation of the deletion. If this is the file you want deleted, click the OK button.

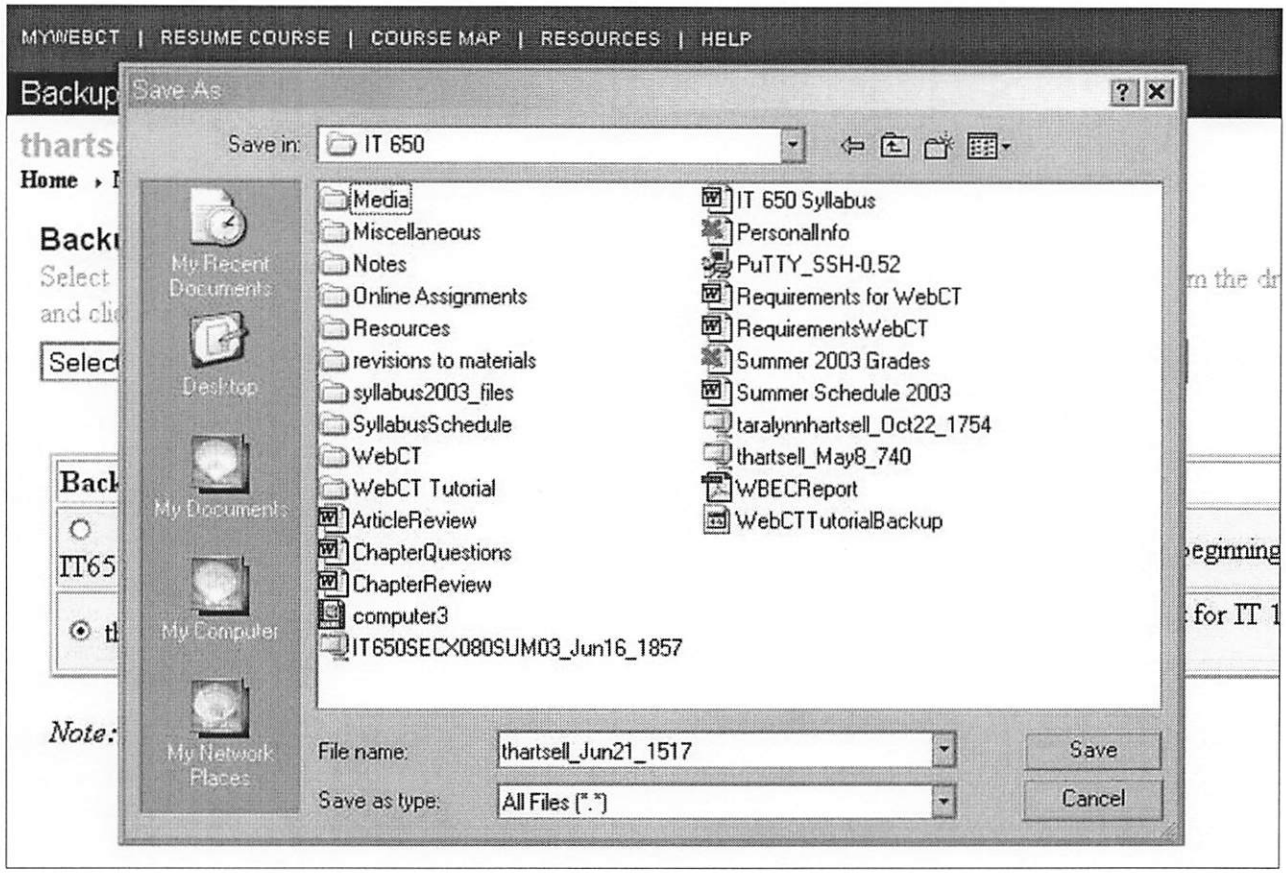


The deleted file should no longer appear in the Course Backup file list.

Backup Filename	File Size (bytes)	Description
○ IT650SECX080SUM03_May9_1142.zip	1458003	Default settings of course from the beginning.
○ thartsell_Jun21_1517.zip	6079671	Course backup during development for IT 100 - Example Course.

Ifyou want to save the backup file to your computer's hard drive, you will need to download the file from WebCT to the computer. To perform this download, select the backup file first and then select the *Download* option under the *Backup File Functions* area. Click the GO button.

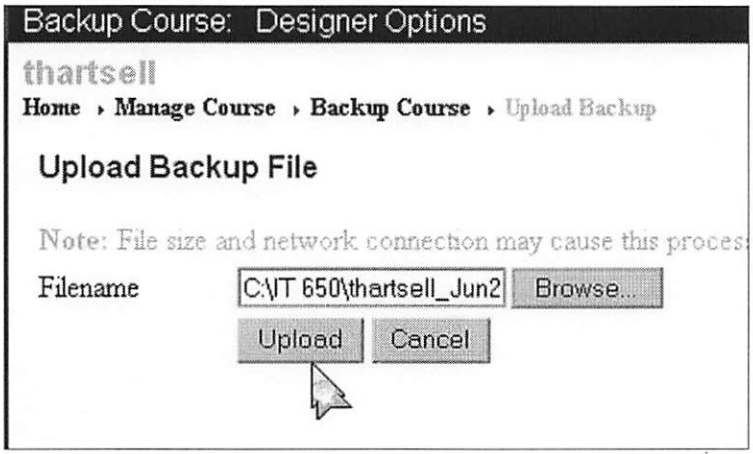




You will then have to find the folder/directory on your computer's hard drive to save the file to (or you can save the file to CD-ROM or ZIP). NOTE: Do not alter the backup filename that WebCT gave originally. If you do this, the file will not be recognizable by WebCT.

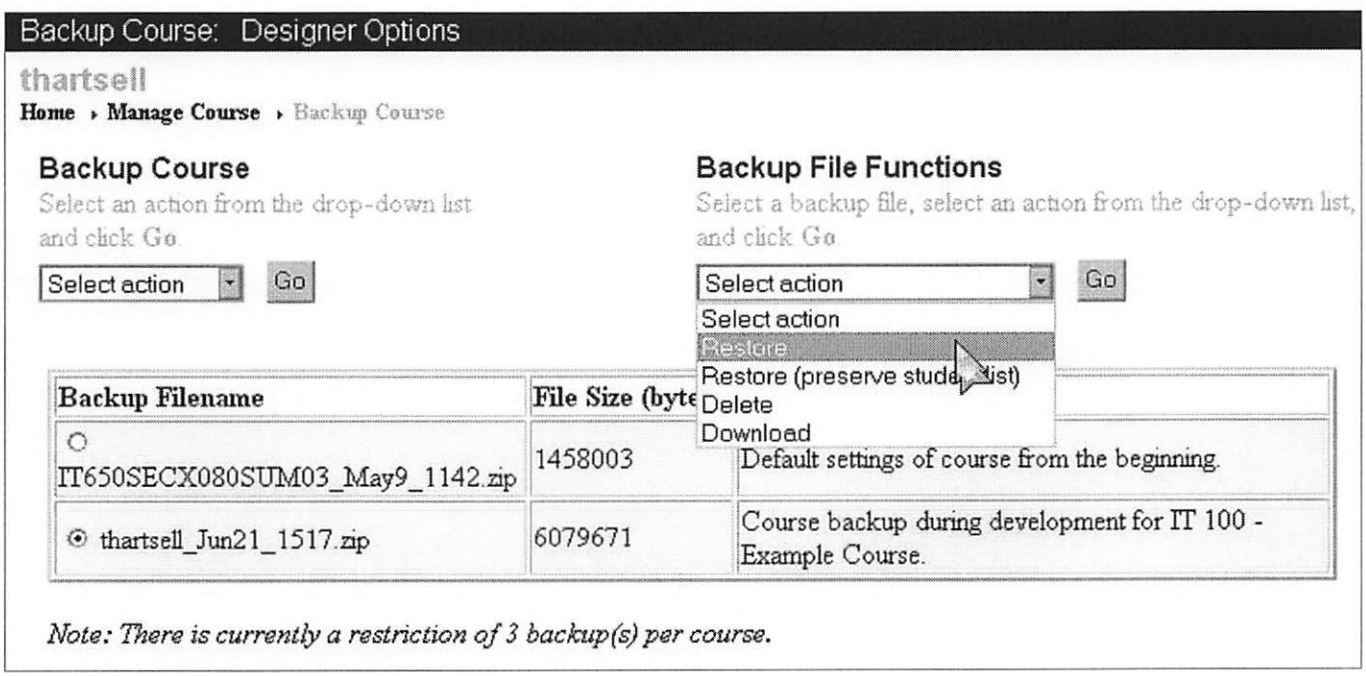
After you click SAVE, make sure that the backup file was saved correctly to the computer's hard drive. You will not see a *successful download message window* like some of the other options.

In case something happens and you need to upload the backup file to your WebCT account, follow the given steps. First, select the *Upload backup* option and click on GO.

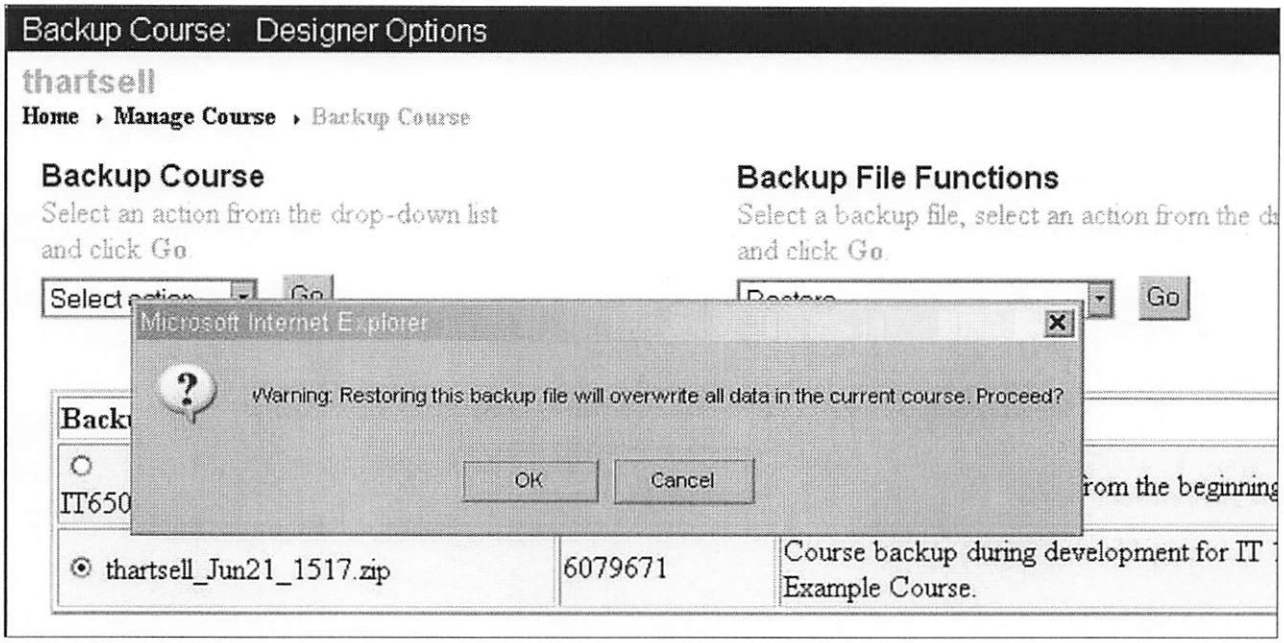


Now, locate the backup file on the hard drive by BROWSING through the files. Click the UPLOAD button after the file has been located. An *Overwrite warning message* may appear if the upload filename is the same as the one that already exists in the *Course Back*up list. Select OK if you want to continue.

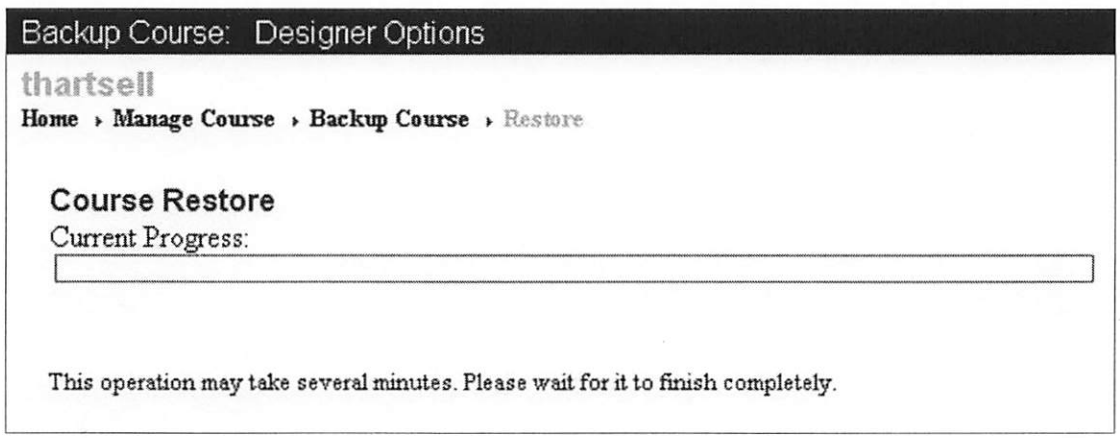
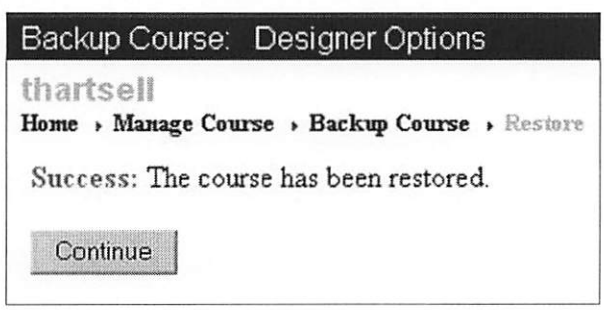
The next step is to restore the backup from the .zip format. To do this, select the backup file you just uploaded from the computer, and select the *Restore* option under the *Backup File Functions* area.



A warning message will appear asking for final confirmation of the restoration process. NOTE: Restoring a backup file will overwrite everything that is currently in use. So, make sure this is what you want to do.



A progress report of the restoration will appear as the backup is being restored.



After the restoration process has been completed, a message like the one below will appear. Your backup should now be restored and your WebCT course will have everything that is in your backup (e.g., graphics, pages, assignments, quizzes, lesson materials, student information, etc.).